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A TALE WITHOUT A TITLE:

GIVE IT WHAT YOU PLEASE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

EUGENIA DE ACTON,

AUTHOR OF

ESSAYS ON THE ART OF BEING HAPPY, THE MICROCOSM, &c.

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A TALE WITHOUT A TITLE.

CHAP. I.

The Arrival of Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Conyers in London—The Distress of the Family—The Heroism of Lady Laura.

A true friend unbosoms freely, advises justly, assists readily, defends courageously, and continues a friend unchangeably.

ANXIOUS to hear intelligence of his family, Mr. Conyers, accompanied by his friend, flew to the house of Mr. Ravensford, their banker, as soon as he reached the metropolis. The ship which

had retaken our voyagers, had put in with their prize at Portsmouth, from whence the two gentlemen had travelled to London in a common stage-coach, their finances being too slender to admit of a more eligible conveyance, they having been plundered by the Spaniards of every thing valuable, except a small bank-note, which escaped their search.

"I left Mr. Woodville this morning," said Mr. Ravensford, in answer to the enquiries of Mr. Conyers, "as composed as it is possible for a man to be in such a situation."

"In such a situation, Sir! For Heaven's sake, what do you mean?"

The exclamatory tone in which Mr. Conyers spoke, told Mr. Ravensford that he was a stranger to the misfortunes of his family; he therefore cautiously, and by degrees, informed him of all the particulars with which he himself was acquainted, which indeed was every thing but

but the circumstance of Mrs. Jodrell's attachment to the young gentleman.

Mr. Conyers was overwhelmed with grief at Mr. Ravensford's recital. His father, his mother, and the children so occupied his soul, that the image of Laura Warburton was hardly distinguished; but she was soon presented in lively colours, and added poignancy to his affliction. Mr. Lloyd was but little less affected; yet he exerted himself to console his friend, whom he attended to Charing-Cross, after having sent a note to apprize Mrs. Woodville and Lady Laura of their arrival.

The meeting of the lovers and the friends was truly a scene of distress; not one ray of hope pervaded the darkness of the prospect. Mrs. Woodville was just returned from the King's Bench, and Laura preparing to go thither to spend the evening.

We will pass in silence over the subjects which employed the first half hour, as they could neither please nor amuse our

 readers,

readers, every heart being torn by grief, and no expedient proposed that could relieve. Letters had been dispatched to New-York about two days: one from Laura to Mr. Conyers was amongst the number, in which she had informed him of Mrs. Jodrell's proposal, and urged his flying to save his father. A general explanation now took place. Mrs. Woodville and Lady Laura received the distressing account of the loss of the cargo which Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Conyers had brought from the West; and the aggravating misfortune of a similar deprivation, though by different means, of expected effects and remittances from the East, depressed still lower the spirits of the gentlemen: but it was not till they understood the terms upon which Mrs. Jodrell offered to liberate Mr. Woodville, that the measure of their grief was full. This was a circumstance which for a few moments deprived them of the power of speech.

"It is not to be endured!" at length

said

said Mr. Conyers, rising from his seat with an air of intrepidity. "This woman's assurance is beyond precedent; but I will see her, and endeavour to reduce her to reason. If I find that to be impossible——"

He stopped, and looked as if determining some great design, while he walked about the room.

"How is it possible the woman can deny the payment of the money?" asked Mr. Lloyd. "I am convinced she was perfectly acquainted with the circumstance."

"No doubt can remain of that," replied Mrs. Woodville; "but as there were no witnesses of the transaction, and as the bond appears against Mr. Woodville uncancelled, it doubtless is in her power to enforce the repayment."

"And can she," exclaimed Mr. Conyers, as if awaking from a reverie, "can she with that conscious fraudulence of soul expect that I will contaminate myself

by such a union! No. Were *not* my heart already wedded—were it even free to receive an impression, and I knew not where to procure my next morsel, I would not, by all that is sacred! consent to——"

"Stop! stop!" hastily interrupted Lady Laura, rising, and approaching him with an animated countenance; "stop, Conyers, till you have seen your father. Make no rash protests: you will always be free to determine. I repeat—*see your father*, and then act according to the dignity of sentiment I know you possess—according to the principles which aggrandize your soul."

She stopped, and looked more than human; her whole form appeared irradiated by the brilliancy of her mind. For a moment he stood suspended, gazing upon her face with a high-raised admiration; then clasping her in his arms, he exclaimed—

"Most noble, as well as most lovely

of

of women! I obey your mandate, and will see my father, as indeed my heart prompts, immediately. But think not, while the breath of life protracts my existence, that my soul can admit another partner!—think not that I can prostitute——"

Again she interrupted him.

"Not another syllable on this subject! *You know my heart—I know your's.* Let us not act unworthy of beings who have a hope in futurity!"

Her voice was solemn and commanding; but, raising her eyes to his, she saw such tenderness and grief, with a visible struggle for fortitude, that heroism gave way to her native softness, and her face was almost reclined upon his breast; but recollection aided her, and bursting into tears, she resolutely tore herself from his arms, and rushed out of the room.

For some moments he stood with his eyes fixed upon the door through which she had passed, absorbed in deep cogitation;

tation; till at length, drawing a sigh which seemed to tear his breast, he said, with his arms folded, and his eyes raised—

"*It must be so!* Yet is there no other way! *Oh my Eliza!*——But, Madam," turning hastily to his mother, "where does Mrs. Jodrell live?"

Mrs. Woodville sat with her face upon one arm, leaning across a table, almost drowned in tears, while her bosom heaved with convulsive sobs. Mr. Lloyd rested against the chimney, void of speech or motion, almost of sense, so intimately, independent of pecuniary circumstances, was the grief of his friends his own.

At the question of Mr. Conyers, Mrs. Woodville raised her head, and said—

"To what purpose, Charles, should you see Mrs. Jodrell? Your father never will permit, nor can I consent, that his release should be purchased at the expence of his son's happiness. I know he had rather end his days in prison, than live to see——"

It

It was with difficulty she articulated the four last words, that of *prison* having occasioned a fresh burst of grief. Catching a hand of Mr. Conyers between both her's, she pressed it to her face, and bathed it with her tears, exclaiming—

"Oh Charles! Charles! what, what *can* be done?"

"Tell me, my dear mother," said he, in a firm tone of voice, "where this woman is to be found Before I see my father, I will see *her*; for think not that I can experience happiness in *any* situation that is to be purchased at so dear a rate as his, or his family's living in difficulties! No: sooner would I banish myself from all I ever loved, and work in a mine to the end of my existence! My life was not given me for myself only!"

Every thing that was great, appeared in the air and manner of Mr. Conyers; his whole aspect was dignified—all the virtues were visible in his countenance; and while he endeavoured to exert his fortitude, his

heart was melting in its native tenderness, and Laura Warburton was the centre of his every wish.

It was at length determined that Mr. Lloyd should attend Mr. Woodville, while Mr. Conyers should wait upon Mrs. Jodrell.

The loss of the West India cargo was to be kept secret from Mr. Woodville for a time, lest such a fresh misfortune should entirely overwhelm him; but this precaution was rendered useless by the kindness of his gaoler, who, having imbibed a respect for his person and deportment, was desirous to amuse him by supplying him with papers for the day; in one of which, the capture and recapture of the vessels were mentioned, with the respective particulars, and the names of the passengers on board, amongst which appeared those of Lloyd and Conyers. The note, therefore, that Mr. Lloyd sent up to apprize Mr. Woodville of his arrival, occasioned more grief than wonder. The meeting was truly

truly sorrowful, and the apprehended motive of Mr. Conyers for so immediately visiting Mrs. Jodrell, gave his affectionate father considerable alarm. He declared he would cheerfully lie in prison during the rest of his days, rather than that his son, by uniting himself with a woman of Mrs. Jodrell's description, should pollute the sacred rite of marriage, and sacrifice the mutual happiness of himself and *Miss Howard.*

As he was speaking, Mr. Conyers sent in his name, and in half a minute was in his father's arms. A manly struggle between tenderness and fortitude was here again conspicuous. Weakened by successive woes, the former was predominant. The sickly countenance, and weakened frame of Mr. Woodville, which had deeply affected Mr. Lloyd, subdued, more than any previous circumstance, the magnanimity of Mr. Conyers.

"Oh my father! my father!" was all he uttered; till Mr. Woodville, having regained some strength of mind, said—

"Let me not have the added sorrow of

seeing my son sink under the distresses of his family. They are now indeed very great; and let us hope their zenith is arrived. Dark as is the immediate prospect, my soul seems to see an opening in the cloud. For wise, and even for good purposes, these afflictions are permitted! He who laid, can easily remove them; and in his own good time, HE WILL. Let us patiently endure the trial; and let us, my children, pray for strength and for deliverance.

"O Thou! who now beholdest the sorrows of our hearts—for what can be hidden from Thy sight!—give us such a disposition in the present hours of adversity as may render us meet objects of Thy mercy, love, and favour. Relieve us (soon if it be Thy will, for our sorrows have wasted our strength) from this weight of woe. Thou knowest that human prudence can avail us nothing; therefore it is that we call earnestly upon Thee, and give ourselves up solely to Thy protection,

being

being assured that without Thy help, we cannot know deliverance. Let us not seek to relieve ourselves by sinful means, but let us rest upon that Saving Arm which the Divine Dispenser of heavenly promises hath, in his Gospel of Truth, assured us shall be extended for the assistance of all who trust in its power.

"We commend to Thy fatherly care, ourselves and all who are dear to us, beseeching Thy forgiveness of our past sins, Thy direction of our future steps, and imploring that faith in Thy goodness, which will entitle us to Thy promised mercies of present comfort and of future bliss."

The affectionate son, and the friend of both, joined the afflicted father in the above supplication, with hearts perfectly sincere; after which, with spirits more composed, they entered into conversation on the particulars of their misfortunes. But we think some apologies are due to our

our *elevated, spirited,* and *tonnish* readers, for permitting two handsome, elegant, and fashionable young men—TO PRAY!!

"What a vulgarity!" exclaims each *belle* and *petit maitre* that peruse our pages. "I always suspected this writer was a Methodist, and now it is evident. Such horrid stuff! The circulator was a stupid fool to send such trash to me! That *boreish* thing he wrote before—the Micro—Micros—something. What did the blockhead mean?" asked Florimel of Colonel Fanshaw.

"He meant the Microscope, but spelt it wrong," replied her oracle. "It was wit he aimed at in the title, but he missed it strangely. His design was to give us a glass that would *multiply* our follies and frailties, which—ha! ha! ha!—I think are *large* enough already!"

"He! he! he!—I think so too. But you are so witty, Colonel Fanshaw, you always makes one die with laughing. I had

had rather hear you talk, than pore over this horrid book. In that *Microscope* the author makes old men preach, and in this thing he teaches young ones to pray. His next performance, I suppose, will be entirely composed of dying speeches and funeral sermons.—'*A Tale without a Title.*' I think it may aptly be termed—*The School for Patience*; for it requires an immense portion of that quality to wade through all this *praying* and *preaching*!"

Had it been Florimel's destiny to have been introduced into the company of Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Conyers in happy times, she would have pronounced them to be the most "*charming, spirited, dear, handsome, fine fellows* that ever were *seen* in the *world*!" Bravery would likewise have been a quality for which she would have extolled them; and the gaiety, as well as politeness of their manners, would have been an inexhaustible theme of conver-

sation.

sation. But she here sees them under the pressure of affliction, and she is angry at perceiving the brilliancy of their character to be tarnished by any traits of what is vulgarly termed *goodness*, as it is now perfectly *outré* for young people to profess Christianity, or practise piety; but as we are rather tinctured with obsolete sentiments, we do not conceive it any real degradation to man or woman, young or old, to believe in the immortality of the soul, or the superintendence of that great Being, without whom this world never could have existed: and as we have thus far exposed ourselves by making this confession, it is but rendering ourselves a little more ridiculous by adding, that we are absolutely of opinion that a man may be as elegant and agreeable, and probably much more valuable, in every relation in life, if he does yield a small portion of belief to the old-fashioned precepts of Christianity, as if he totally discarded every

every point of doctrine but those now held by persons of the first estimation in the higher circles.

TRUTH.

P. S.—Till we found ourselves impelled to write the above signature, we never suspected our hand to have any other guide than our own judgment and belief; but Truth, we are now convinced, was the incontestable dictator.

CHAP. II.

The Contest of Generosity—Lady Laura leaves the House of her Friends—Her Letters to Mr. Conyers and Mrs. Woodville.

They that love beyond the world, cannot be separated by it. Death cannot kill what never die.

"YOU have been to visit Mrs. Jodrell, Charles," was the speech from Mr. Woodville to Mr. Conyers which must connect our tale. "What was your motive for that visit?—and what is the result?"

"My motive, Sir, was to compromise, if possible, the business which detains you here: the result, a disappointment; as Mrs.

Mrs. Jodrell has left London, and I cannot gain intelligence of her present residence, but hope to be more successful in the morning."

A long conversation, and indeed a contest, now ensued between the gentlemen; Mr. Woodville strongly insisting that his son should not think of complying with the widow's proposals, and Mr. Conyers as peremptorily refusing to make any promises upon the subject till he should know what else could be done to procure his father liberty.

"*This* I will promise," said he, "but nothing more. If it be possible to find any other method likely to produce the same desirable effect, though not so immediately, I will wait the event with all possible patience; but if I perceive no probable prospect within a given time, I must—and pardon me if I say I will—be left to my own determination."

A great deal was said on all sides, Mr. Lloyd being sometimes swayed by the arguments

arguments of one, sometimes by those of the other generous contender.

Had Mr. Woodville urged his son to have sacrificed himself for his release, he would have obeyed him, but perhaps with some reluctance. It was the affection he exemplified, by insisting upon being himself the victim, that determined the filial Charles to ransom, at the price of his own happiness, his father.

The dispute was at length terminated by a compromise. Mr. Woodville promised he would not give an absolute interdiction, upon Mr. Conyers reluctantly engaging not to enter the indissoluble state without apprizing him of the fatal day.

Unpleasant as is the situation of these our friends, we should more satisfactorily remain with them, than seek the presence of Mrs. Jodrell, whom the thread of our narrative obliges us to follow into the country.

It was the determinate plan of Mr.

Lawyer

Lawyer Palmingstead that the business in which Mrs. Jodrell had engaged him, should by some means or other, make his fortune. Sometimes he thought of entering into a compromise with Mr. Woodville to release him for half the sum pretendedly due upon the bond; then he meditated to threaten his client with exposure, except she would bribe, at a high rate, his taciturnity. At length he resolved to marry the lady. This was settled in his mind previous to the information he received from Mrs. Kitty, of her mistress's being *desperately* in love with Mr. Conyers, which, so far from inducing him to relinquish his design, stimulated him to pursue it with redoubled art and industry.

He now entered into treaty with Mrs. Kitty, for whom he found it expedient to entertain a sudden passion, which she received with abundance of satisfaction; and, to make a suitable return, discarded two admirers, who for three months had contested the prize of her heart.

Mr. Palmingstead at length opened to Mrs. Kitty his design upon her Lady, whose fortune he said they might, by proper management, secure to themselves. At first view, Mrs. Kitty made strong objections to the nature of the treaty; but the gentleman was so dexterous in advancing irresistible arguments, that Mrs. Kitty was soon all his own. He observed that her Lady was old and ugly; that it was impossible for him to think of being a constant husband to such a fright; that she herself should be his real wife, while her mistress bore the name; and that when she was dead, which, by aid of the brandy-bottle, she soon would be, she herself should be Mrs. Palmingstead, *and have her mistress's watch* and *rings*, and *all her clothes* and *trinkets!*

The last articles prevailed. Down went chastity and common honesty in one sentence. Of course, every virtue soon followed, and poor Kitty was ready to execute every command of Mr. Palmingstead.

Palmingstead. Already in idea did she daily replenish her Lady's little bottle of spirits; and once it crossed her mind that she had heard it said laudanum would make people *sleep sound*. But she started from the suggestion; her mind was not yet ripe for such a deed.

The next time the idea occurred, she would not have started from *surprise*, though perhaps she would still have shrunk from it with horror. By degrees that horror would have diminished; till, familiarized by the frequency of its intrusion, she would have *reasoned* upon it, and ventured to have weighed the resulting advantages against the crime of commission, when the scale of the latter would imperceptibly have been lightened, till its contents were no longer perceived; consent to commission would have followed of course; and then——*Alas! poor Kitty!*

When Palmingstead understood the design of Mrs. Jodrell to sink her claims with

with her name, he made a visit to Mrs. Woodville, from whom he learned that no decisive step could be taken till the arrival of an answer to some letters which had been sent to New York. Conjecturing, therefore, that the gentleman was summoned to espouse the lady, he hastened to her house, apparently out of breath, to inform her that he had cause to apprehend a suspicion had arisen of there being a fraudulent intention between them to extort the payment of a bond which had previously been cancelled, and that he was afraid a design was forming to arrest them both; for which reason, he thought it his duty to advise her immediate retirement into the country, leaving him, as he could not so readily be come at, to stand the brunt of the business.

This had the desired effect. The lady was indeed frightened, and dreaded its being destructive of her darling hope. She therefore pursued Mr. Palmingstead's advice, and went to a village in Essex,

leaving

leaving Mrs. Kitty to give intelligence to Mr. Palmingstead of whatever should occur in her absence. When, therefore, Mr. Conyers enquired for Mrs. Jodrell, he was answered by the tutored Kitty, that her Lady was on a tour through England, that it was uncertain when she would return, and that all her business was transacted by Mr. Palmingstead, to whom she gave him a direction. Mr. Conyers then pursued his way to the chambers of the gentleman; but found he had been summoned to the Chester Assizes, to give evidence in a cause of perjury, and that his return was uncertain, as he had other business in that vicinity.

Upon this intelligence, Mr. Conyers repaired to the King's Bench prison, where, requesting Mr. Lloyd to inform Mrs. Woodville of his intention, he passed the night with his father; Mr. Lloyd having persuaded the ladies to rest at home,

home, returning to his friends in confinement.

When Lady Laura and Mrs. Woodville were left together, the former declared her intention of withdrawing from the presence of Mr. Conyers, rightly judging, from the well-known fervency of his affection, that his task of duty would more easily be performed in her absence. Mrs. Woodville opposed this with warmth: she could not bear the deprivation, yet hardly knew how to reconcile her wishes for her husband's enlargement, with those which related to the union of Laura and Mr. Conyers.

"What, my Eliza—what can I say, consistently with my fervent love for you all!" was Mrs. Woodville's tearful address to her friend.

"Say not, my dear Madam, one word more upon the affecting subject: my resolves are taken, and I trust nothing can alter my determination but an unexpected,

pected, and almost impossible change of circumstances," replied Lady Laura, with her eyes almost drowned in tears; then embracing her with the utmost affection, she retired to her sleeping apartment, where two of the children were in bed, and wrote the following letter to Mr. Conyers:—

"To enlarge upon the exquisite distress under which I sit down to write my determined sentiments, would seem as if I were pleading for your compassion, at a moment in which I am more entitled to your congratulation, for having arisen superior to that tender attachment which I can never extinguish, and of which I glory that I am susceptible. But, Conyers—my dear Conyers!—(let me for this last time indulge in the language of my heart)—shall we only consider our own happiness, and the happiness of

each other? Or, if we do, can it be found exclusively of the happiness of such friends as we are blessed with? Could we see your father struggling with difficulties, oppressed more by grief than by time, turning his pitying eyes upon his weeping wife and humbled children, without the self upbraiding sigh which would poison every enjoyment, when we considered that our own felicities—if they could merit that epithet—were purchased at the dear price of the comforts and conveniences to which they have been habituated?—No; it would be impossible: nor could you think of me, or I of you, with that respect and esteem which I am proudly conscious we now entertain for each other.

"The brevity of this life, of which many complain, is surely one of its greatest blessings. It is a probation: and who can wish a probation to be attenuated? Its end is happiness in an ensuing state, where the friendships we here contract,

shall

shall be for ever continued. Let us then, since we are called to it, and consequently empowered to obey, or the obedience would not be exacted—let us act up to our consciousness of rectitude, and let our mutual affection be exemplified in that best instance—assisting each other to pursue resolutely the path of duty.

"Fly, my dear friend, to relieve your father. Already I seem convinced you have determined to sacrifice your own views to his welfare. To assist your resolution, and to spare the pang of the *eclaircissement*, I leave the family, not to return till your filial affection shall have conducted him in freedom to his family; after which, if my assistance will be accepted, I will endeavour to educate his daughters with the same alacrity as if they were indeed to have been my sisters.

"Oh Conyers! if that event had been permitted!——But whither is my heart guiding my pen! Let me fly from the

dangerous retrospect, lest it draw me to a precipice!

"Tell Mr. and Mrs. Woodville—tell Mr. Lloyd—tell Albert——yet, Oh! tell them nothing. I must hasten to be gone. Recollection flows so fast upon me, that I dare not add another word besides that of

"ELIZA."

Lady Laura, as soon as she had finished the above, burst into an agony of grief; and, throwing herself upon the bed, wept incessantly upwards of two hours. The idea of separating herself from a family so beloved, wounded her soul, which she most fervently wished could that instant be released from its mortal tenement.

Starting at length from the stupor which an indulgence of her sorrow had occasioned, she arose from the bed, and penned

penned the ensuing letter to Mrs. Woodville:—

"To you, my beloved benefactress, and almost dearest existing friend, I need not expatiate upon the excess of grief which tears my breast on leaving a family whose happiness is so intimately connected with my own—though now in opposition—that I must destroy the first wishes of my heart to procure a return of its prosperity, or be wretched through the remaining term of my existence.

"When you read this, I shall have left your protection, never to return to it till——Spare, Oh spare me the expression! —Till what?—till the extinction of all my hope of terrestrial felicity! I confess it, my dear Madam. Yet *why* do I confess it? For this reason—that you may not imagine——Yet you will not.

 Excuse

Excuse my distraction: I scarce know what I say, but will endeavour to be more collected.

"Be in no pain about my destination. I have formed my plan, and will let you hear, though I dare not trust myself *to hear from you*, how I succeed. I have still a few remaining guineas, and shall take with me the little pamphlet I penned on ship-board, which, if determined partiality has not greatly flattered me, will produce a few more. I mention this to ease the anxious fears of my friends for my situation, *till my dear Mr. Woodville returns to bless his family!!!*

"The enclosed, which will, I doubt not, be communicated to you, will announce my intention of returning to my lovely young charges, after——

"Oh my friend! I am ashamed of my weakness in a cause which demands greater fortitude: but I am firm—I am immoveable in my determinations. Whether your future residence shall be fixed in this island,

island, or on the Continent of America—though greatly preferable to me would be the latter—my attendance, my best assistance, my gratitude, my most fervent affection will court your acceptance.

"May that great and gracious Being, to whom I kneel for the happiness of *you and all your's*, strengthen my mind, that I may determine and do what He commands, and will approve. Till the morning dawn I will entreat His direction and blessing! He will *not* reject me!—My *dear* friend! a beam of light breaks in upon my soul through this outward darkness. I will lay down my pen to adore its approach, after subscribing myself

"Your affectionately grateful

"ELIZA."

The mind of Lady Laura was indeed illumined after she had written the above.

Accustomed as she had been to see future brightness in a dismal present, and to the cheerings of the "*still small voice*," she could hardly credit the reality of her present enlivening, and turned to a view of her distresses to *actualize* her feelings.

Were we not in the midst of a period too sad to allow of ludicrous observation, we would pre-pronounce the censure of little critics on our presuming to use phrases not to be met with in their printed vocabularies; but Laura Warburton demands our unremitting attention, and our regard for her is so much superior to our respect for the tribe last mentioned, that we are impelled to give her the due preference.

After she found it impossible to keep in her view the dark side of the picture, she gladly and gratefully admitted the gleams of distant comfort; though, according to human reckoning, it appeared next to impossible that her sum of future happiness could arise to any considerable amount.

"I am

"I am not," said she to herself, "deceived in my sentiments. Depressed as was my soul by a train of the most afflicting events, how could it thus suddenly, and even without exertion, create to itself this divine solace—this opening in the surrounding, seemingly impenetrable gloom! Can it bid itself be still in a tumult of grief? Can it suddenly hush its own complainings in the very depth of dire distress? Ah, no! It listens to a voice more powerful than its own—it obeys a mandate which it cannot resist."

Laura now spent a period in a situation to which minds, chained to externals, are not only strangers, but which deny the possibility of its being attainable by sons of earth. And why? Because they themselves, through lack of endeavour, never experienced its reality, and therefore denounce it to be visionary.

Alas, poor souls!—poor souls indeed!—

we pity you!—and did we know that nothing less than time and occasion can convince you, would endeavour to argue you into happiness. To our efforts you would be impenetrable; our positions you would deny; our language would be deemed jargon; and therefore we leave you to a more irresistible teacher.

It was not till long after midnight, that Lady Laura seemed disposed to accept the refreshments of sleep; but having requested the servant to awaken her before the usual hour of Mrs. Woodville's rising, she ventured to indulge in a forgetfulness of every sensible occurrence. When she awoke, her mind was tranquil, but not so enlightened as before her sleep; for it is not to be imagined that the mental comfort she had previously enjoyed, would be continued through all her outward trouble. Were that to be the case, distress would be only a name, it being impossible the soul could be truly grieved while under such an influence. When it ceases,

it must be from a belief of its reality, from remembrance of having experienced its consolation, and from hope of its return in a due season, that we are to extract comfort.

We avoid, as much as possible, all sectarian expressions and sectarian opinions, except those of pure, simple, unembellished Christianity; in which, be it known, we glory, and of whose badge we trust we shall never be ashamed.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Mr. Conyers determines to marry Mrs. Jodrell.—Mr. Woodville opposes it.—Mr. Conyers conquers; and, attended by Mr. Lloyd, procures the Licence.

If a man would form a true judgment of the conduct of *another*, let him suppose himself to be under similar circumstances; and if he wishes for a criterion of *his own*, imagine it to be practised by a person whom he dislikes.

IN the ship which brought Mr. Woodville's family from New York, was a young trader of the name of Saunders, whose wife was a milliner near St. James's; and our American ladies wishing to make a proper appearance on their arrival in London,

London, had intimated to their fellow-voyager that they should be glad of the assistance of Mrs. Saunders to equip them in English dresses, which, it is not to be questioned, the gentlewoman was ready to afford on the first intimation.

Mrs. Saunders was a very decent and good kind of woman. She had several times waited on our ladies at Charing-Cross, and had expressed her wish to engage a young person of liberal education to attend the number of *quality* which frequented her *chambers*—for she was in too elevated a rank to keep a *shop*—as none of her assistants were so well qualified as she could wish, for her purpose.

In consequence of this information, given about the period of Mrs. Jodrell's visit to Mrs. Woodville, Laura Warburton, who began to apprehend the difficulties of her friend's circumstances might render it eligible for her to endeavour to increase their finances by an exertion of her abilities, had asked Mrs. Saunders, in a

half serious, half jesting manner, if she would accept her services.

"Oh dear! yes, Ma'am," replied the milliner with a smile, "and leave the terms entirely to yourself; for I am sure your appearance alone would draw every lady of taste in the town to my chambers. But you must never be seen by any gentleman; for if you were, I should not be able to find room for all my customers. But, indeed," continued she, more seriously, "I never admit gentlemen beyond the front room; because I am determined my young people shall not through my means hazard their reputation."

To the gentlewoman above mentioned, our heroine determined to apply; and packing up a few clothes, her writing implements, drawing materials, embroidering frames, &c. for which she thought she might in the course of business find occasion, she requested the servant to call a coach; kissed, and wept over the sleeping children; and walking softly into Mrs.

Mrs. Woodville's chamber, laid her letters on the dressing-table; after which, with a return of agonizing sensations, she rushed from the house into the coach, and was driven off according to her directions.

About an hour after the departure of her greatly beloved friend, Mrs. Woodville awoke from an unrefreshing slumber; and seeing two letters upon her table, hastily arose, and broke the seal of that directed to herself with a trembling hand; and when she read the contents, was overwhelmed with grief.

While the question was depending, many were the arguments which fondness for her husband advanced; but when her friend was absolutely gone from her, they seemed of no avail. She did not then apprehend that her absence could be, nor ought it to be, a means to give her husband liberty; and she considered her situation more deeply distressing than it ever had been before.

The

The arrival of Mr. Conyers, whose voice she heard from below, increased her perturbation. She dreaded to afflict him with the information of Laura's absence; yet recollecting the possibility of her having informed Charles of her intended residence, she flew down with the letter in her hand; but when she beheld the strong mark of sorrow which his countenance exhibited, she sunk upon a chair, and while tears almost prevented utterance, mournfully exclaimed—"Oh Charles! Charles! she is gone indeed!"

Had Mrs. Woodville for a moment considered the still greater consequence Laura's departure was of to Mr. Conyers than even to herself, the goodness of her heart would have prevented her abruptness; but the loss of her friend seemed to have filled the measure of her woe, and, at the instant, she only thought of finding consolation from one who, from *equal* concern, would sympathize in her grief. As she spoke, the complexion of her son turned deadly

deadly pale: for a few moments he gazed in silence, and seemed to gasp for breath; then in a low, tremulous tone, as if afraid of the answer he requested, said—"For Heaven's sake, tell me what new tortures I am to encounter!"

"Read that," replied his mother, "and tell me where I can find my dear Eliza."

He snatched at the letter, and tearing it open, perused it with avidity. As he read, his countenance represented a stormy sky. One moment it was covered with clouds of deepest darkness; the next, his eye was suddenly illumined, and then again overcast by dismal, dire sensations. Putting the letter in his bosom, he folded his arms, and traversed the room with hasty steps, while Mrs. Woodville sat leaning on the arm of a chair, absorbed in thought.

"Divine creature!" at length escaped the lips of Mr. Conyers. "Yes, you *shall* be obeyed: I will not act unworthy your opinion. My conduct shall not disgrace

disgrace your affection. Yet, Oh yet! ——Heavenly maid!"

He crossed the room still faster; till, stopping near his mother, he spoke with a solemn and dignified air.

"Madam, my father *shall* be saved! I had formed my resolution before I left him. I will disobey—I will break my promise. If in the meantime you can learn tidings *of your friend*, set my heart at rest with the knowledge of her safety. May the great GOD of Earth and Heaven preserve her in peace—in blessedness!"

As he spoke, he crossed his hands upon his breast, and raised his eyes to heaven, a tear falling upon his cheek which glowed with fervency.

Mrs. Woodville contemplated him with awfulness. She continued silent. For a few moments he seemed insensible of her presence, till, his strength exhausted by the labouring efforts of his mind, he leaned against the wall, and requested her to order breakfast. Alarmed by his appearance,

ance, she summoned the servant, and would have sent for medical assistance; but he begged her to desist, and assured her a cup of tea would be a sufficient specific.

During the period of breakfasting. Mrs. Woodville and Mr. Conyers arranged their intended proceedings for the ensuing day. After which, the lady went to her husband with the letters, Charles being resolved not to see his father till he could pronounce his being at liberty; and Mr. Lloyd, upon the arrival of Mrs. Woodville, went to Charing-Cross, to assist his friend in the arduous business in which they were all involved.

When Mr. Woodville read the letters of Lady Laura, and understood the determination of his son, he was extremely agitated, and dispatched a request to see Mr. Conyers immediately. Mr. Lloyd received the message; and repairing to the King's Bench, told Mr. Woodville, it would be useless to urge his friend to relinquish

relinquish a resolution, from which he was convinced nothing could divert him; and requested him to submit to be restored to his family by whatever measures Charles might deem it eligible to pursue.

The contest between the father and the son was truly affectionate, and greatly generous; the more ardently supported by each, because the other insisted upon being the sacrifice. Had either been actuated by selfish considerations, that sacrifice, whichever had made it, would have been grievous. The more earnestly Mr. Woodville entreated Mr. Conyers *not* to give himself to Mrs. Jodrell, the more strongly he resolved upon the direful act. The more fervently Charles requested his father to *consent* to the distressful measure, the more determinedly he opposed its being taken: but the opposition did not arise from what cynics term the perverseness of human nature, but from a noble emulation kindled by opposing affection and generosity. In the end, Mr. Conyers triumphed.

triumphed. He would not consent to see his father till he not only released him from his promise, but engaged, by Mrs. Woodville and Mr. Lloyd, to submit every thing to his management.

Mr. Conyers, now a free agent, endeavoured—not to forget Laura Warburton—that was impossible; but to render his remembrance of, and his affection for her, a means of his persevering in what he deemed the path of rectitude. He determined to prove himself worthy of her good opinion, and of the affection she confessed to entertain for him.

"What would Eliza in this case advise?" was Mr. Conyers's self interrogation, when any doubtful circumstance occurred; and as he believed she would decide, he determined. Of consequence, he resolved upon repeating the marriage ceremony, a rite of sacred and of binding import, with Mrs. Jodrell, that he might thereby release his father from imprisonment, and his family from consequent wretchedness.

"Was

"Was he equitable in this resolve?"

We do not pretend to answer the question. Had we ourselves been individually concerned, perhaps we should have availed ourselves of that command which says—"Thou shalt not do evil, that good may come of it."

But Mr. Conyers was fraught with youthful fervour. He adored Laura Warburton for what, in his opinion, merited canonization. He pronounced that he had a right over his own happiness. He argued that he did not prostitute the sacred ordinance for self advantage, and that he did not deceive Mrs. Jodrell by false professions; for he resolved to tell her, as he afterwards did, that his heart was in possession of another woman, and that he consented to marry her, to redeem his father. Thus fortified, he again repaired to Ludgate-Hill, and again was disappointed in his expectation of seeing the fraudulent widow; to whom, leaving our favourites in a situation which we cannot mitigate,

mitigate, we must for a short period reluctantly return.

Mr. Palmingstead was still employed in one of the western counties, and Mrs. Jodrell *incog.* at a village in Essex. Day after day Mr. Conyers called at her house; but received the constantly repeated reply that she was not returned. In this state of uncertainty our friends passed many days of the most torturing anxiety, till at length the lady, venturing to visit her own home at a late hour in one dark evening, encountered Mr. Conyers as she stepped from the carriage.

Astonished at his appearance, her voice faltered, and she was ready to sink upon the pavement; but judging, by the manner of his address, that all was safe, she invited him to accompany her into the house, where of course an *eclaircissement* ensued, and the result was a meditated marriage between the parties. But it was not till Mr. Conyers had argued, threatened, and implored, that he

 consented

consented to become her victim. Mrs. Jodrell was cool and resolute. She said he must consent to the terms proposed, or take the consequence. She did not even endeavour at a blush, but boldly contended that his merits would justify her measures.

With firmness and sincerity he avowed his predilection for Miss Howard, and declared that his consent was only extorted by apprehension of his father's health suffering in his lengthened confinement.

To this she replied, with the utmost nonchalance, that she was so perfectly convinced of his honour and general integrity, that she should not hesitate to rely on his making a due return to the affection she had so long entertained for him; nor did she fear his treating her with that kindness she was determined her conduct to him should merit.

He told her it was probable his father would return to America, and that his own

own time would be divided between that Continent, the West Indies, and England; but nothing that he could urge, had the least effect in dissuading her from an execution of her purpose. The speeches which terminated the controversy were as follow:—

Mr. Conyers.—You *must* know the demand is unjust: you must be convinced the money has been paid.

Mrs. Jodrell.—I am firmly convinced to the contrary. Mr. Jodrell, as you well know, was the most regular man in the world in his accounts; and not the least mention was made in any of his papers of the transaction.

Mr. Conyers.—Do you think my father would avow his having discharged the obligation, if he knew it to be still due?

Mrs. Jodrell.—I used to think your father an honest man; but on whom would you have me rely with most confidence—your father, or my deceased husband?

Mr. Conyers.—Mr. Jodrell did not tell you that my father owed him money upon bond.

Mrs. Jodrell.—Mr. Jodrell, in his last illness, almost in his last moments, mentioned the *account*, though he did not particularly specify the *bond*, and desired me not to *hurry* Mr. Woodville, as so large a sum could not perhaps be paid on short notice. And pray, Sir, find me the man whose bare word, under such contradictory circumstances, you would take for ten or twelve thousand pounds! Besides, let me ask—is it not strange that your father should *lose*, or carelessly mislay, a paper of such consequence as the discharge for a sum of such amount? I repeat what I have said—let that appear, and my claim will cease. If you cannot produce it, accept my proposal, or prepare to answer my lawyer: there is no other alternative.

Mr. Conyers, rising with an intrepid air.—Then, Madam, I *will* accept your

proposal:

proposal: but I warn you to beware of the ensuing consequences. My affection, I repeat, can never be your's.

Mrs. Jodrell, with a glowing cheek and a smile.—I will trust to the effects of time, Sir, for that blessing. And now tell me when our business is to be concluded.

Mr. Conyers.—To-morrow morning, or never. I cannot answer for a continuance of my resolution.

In saying which he made a slight bow, and departed. When he arrived at Charing Cross, he looked earnestly in the face of Mr. Lloyd, and said—

"My fate is determined: to-morrow morning I marry Mrs. Jodrell."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed his friend, and drew a sigh.

"*It must be.* Are you sorry, George?"

"Sorry! Why, yes. And yet——"

"Say no more, but go with me to the Commons."

This was all that passed between the gentlemen.

gentlemen. Mrs. Woodville, after seeing the children in bed, had returned to the prison of her husband. The night was advancing: the friends walked silently to the place, where the fatal instrument was procured, and measured back their steps without conversation.

When they reached the house, Mr. Lloyd ordered supper, for Mr. Conyers thought not of eating; and they sat down with minds heavily oppressed.

Far otherwise was the situation of Mrs. Jodrell. The point she had long laboured to reach, was in view. Charles Conyers had always been an object of her affection; of course she hated Laura Warburton. Revenge, therefore, and triumph over the Woodvilles, whom she considered as enemies, united with passion, and stimulated her to determine upon conquest.

With a perturbed mind she summoned Mrs. Kitty as soon as the door closed upon her elected husband, to prepare

some

some articles of finery for the morrow; and after a little simpering, while her eyes proclaimed victory, she informed her confidant, who had been thrown into amazement by her unexpected return, of her intended marriage in the morning.

"Married, Madam! and to-morrow! Pray, Madam, to whom?"

"To whom, hussy! To my Conyers, to be sure! To whom else is it possible I should think of giving my fortune?"

The girl, thrown off her guard, and instantly perceiving the destruction of her fairy schemes, burst into tears, and exclaimed—"Ah, poor Mr. Palmingstead!"

"What do you mean by poor Mr. Palmingstead?" sternly interrogated her angry mistress.

"Oh Madam!" sobbed the artful girl, whose recollection was returned, "you don't know—you don't know *how much* the poor gentleman dies for you!"

"For me, Kitty!" said the lady,

already appeased by the idea of a dying lover. "You must be mistaken sure! Mr. Palmingstead cannot think of *me!*"

"Alas, poor gentleman! he thinks of nobody else, I am sure! Oh Madam! the sleepless days and nights he has had on your account! But you will be angry again if I tell you half what I know about him."

"No, Kitty, I shall not be angry. I am sorry for the poor young gentleman, if this be the case. But we must not talk of these matters now, as I really have many things to do to-night, not knowing how soon Mr. Conyers will call upon me in the morning. But I really pity poor Mr. Palmingstead!"

Kitty was now at her *ne plus ultra.* Had there been time, she would have sent messengers half over the island in pursuit of the lawyer; or had she known the arcana of the business, would have gone to Charing Cross, and developed the whole

transaction:

transaction: but Palmingstead had given her nothing more than the outline; she was therefore obliged to obey with apparent alacrity, while she was cursing her mistress and Mr. Conyers in every corner.

Leaving Mrs. Jodrell busy in preparing her nuptial habillement, we will return nine days back in the period of our history:—recommencing the morning on which Laura Warburton left the family of her friends at Charing-Cross, we will trace her steps to the memorable era above recorded.

CHAP. IV.

Lady Laura goes to the House of Mrs. Saunders.—The Park.—A Card of Compliments to Miss Emily Minifer.

If we find any one under a fatal delusion of sentiment, let us pity, rather than condemn the error into which he is fallen. Are we, let us ask ourselves, so grounded in a true faith, that we cannot be shaken by the subtilty of evil arguments?

WHEN Lady Laura stopped at the door of Mrs. Saunders's house, the servant, who was just descended from her sleeping apartment, stared with astonishment at seeing so elegant a person abroad at such an early hour; and replied, in answer to her enquiries, that her mistress would not rise, except she chose to have her

her called, till ten o'clock, she having sat late the preceding night to finish some wedding clothes for Lady Sarah Wilmington. Lady Laura therefore requested the servant to take care of her trunk, drank a glass of water, discharged the coach, and walked towards the park, which was not far distant, scarce knowing with what intention; but her mind was too much disturbed to remain at Mrs. Saunders's till the family arose.

When she passed the entrance to the park, the freshness of the morning charmed her senses, and she was glad of the circumstance of Mrs. Saunders sleeping longer than usual.

What would have been the sensations of Laura Warburton, had she known that Clarissa Melville had left the walk into which she was entered, about five minutes!? Will not our readers lament this *mis-meeting?* Will they not be angry with that blind guide of human destiny, worshipped under the name of Chance?

They will; and we must leave them in their displeasure, while we account for the sudden appearance of the lady last mentioned.

Miss Devie, with whom Clarissa had continued as long as was consistent with prudence, was, though an only *daughter*, not an only *child*. She had a brother who, at the time of Miss Melville's introduction into the family, was at College. At his return, he was captivated by his sister's elegant attendant, and was so importunate in his libertine addresses, that Clarissa, acquainting Miss Devie with the cause, found it necessary to quit her situation; and having made an acquaintance with the widow of a Clergyman who painted and embroidered for her sustenance, she proposed assisting her in her employ, to which the good gentlewoman—Lambert her name—acceded with pleasure, and indeed with thanks, as she knew Miss Melville was a proficient in every

every thing that could be performed with a needle.

With Mrs. Lambert this friend of Lady Laura lived in a state of tranquillity, but not of happiness; Mr. Addington, of whom no account could be obtained, keeping that desirable end of life from her possession.

A West-Indian Captain, to whom Mrs. Lambert was aunt, and who divided his time between London and Barbadoes, had, at the request of that lady, to whom Clarissa had related the particulars of her life, made constant enquiries respecting the families of Melville and Addington, and as constantly received the following information—that the Major still breathed threatenings against his ungracious, undutiful son, of whom he had never directly received any intelligence, but who, he had reason to suppose, had gone from England, where it was known he went in pursuit of Clarissa to the East Indies, as a Cadet in the Company's

Company's service; but the books had been examined, and no Orlando Addington could be found;—that Mr. and Mrs. Melville were living very extravagantly; and, to procure a supply for present exigencies, the gentleman had given a considerable sum to Robert, his only surviving son by his first wife, to relinquish his claim on the estates, which had in consequence been sold, without any consideration of a provision for the daughters. Fanny, who continued a favourite with Major Addington, was almost constantly at his house, and directed the affairs of his family; and so much had she, by her artful management, practised upon his credulity, that he made a will, in which he gave her all his property, except his son would return, and make her his wife.

This will, stimulated by despotic ideas of the parental authority which Orlando had offended, he published to all his friends, with an expectation that it might reach the ears of his son (of whom, notwith-

notwithstanding his tyrannical conduct, he was excessively fond), and occasion his return.

Mr. and Mrs Melville had a large family of young children. Fanny, though disliked by every one else, continued the confidant of her mother-in-law, to their mutual disrepute, it being suspected they assisted each other in some whispered intrigues.

The accounts given of Clarissa were vague and contradictory. At one time it was said she was living, unmarried, with a Captain of some ship; at another, that she was his wife; and then, that intelligence had been received of her death.

This was the sum of the information brought from Barbadoes by the nephew of Mrs Lambert.

At the period to which we are arrived, Clarissa, now near twenty two years of age, had resided with the lady last mentioned, upwards of a twelvemonth, and had considerably increased the profits of

her employ by her skill in needle-works of every kind. They lived in genteel retirement near Westminster Abbey.

Clarissa, whose person was genteel; with a face expressive of the sweetest sensibility, had captivated several young men of fortune during her abode with Mrs. Lambert, to whom applications had been made on account of her niece (for in that character she was looked upon in the vicinity of their habitation). but without success; Clarissa determining never to give a heartless hand to any man existing.

"She was perfectly right," observes Miss Emily Minifer. "If I cannot marry a man *for whom I could die*, I will live single all my life, which I think will be greatly preferable to a marriage of indifference."

This young lady, who has been some time under our guardianship, was born with, or rather has acquired, a very curious

curious turn of sentiment. The person of Miss Emily Minifer is pleasing, and her countenance prepossessing: her understanding is good, and her temper agreeable; yet is she likely to live single, and die solitary, because she chuses to suppose it ineligible to accept an offer, but from a man for whom she shall previously have imbibed a furious affection, without considering that such a circumstance would arraign the extreme delicacy by which she professes to be actuated. Miss Emily is but just turned sixteen; yet she claims a title to think for herself, and maintains the propriety of every young person's asserting an independence of opinion, which renders a naturally amiable girl disgusting, if not ridiculous. Would Miss Emily suppress these adult sentiments, she would not only be greatly more pleasing, but in time much wiser, as she would improve by precepts of experience from persons who have *that* advantage,

tage, added to those originally given by nature, which, she ought to admit, may possibly be as great as what she herself possesses. We the other day ventured to observe, in Miss Emily's presence, that the heart of a woman is made to be *won*, not *offered*. She was exasperated at the outrage committed upon the masculine freedom of her sex; yet contends for that soft and feminine grace which renders that sex so fascinating.

Pray, Sir, let me ask you, who are an adept in the science of gallantry, and upon whom Miss Emily turns an eye of favour, whether you would so gratefully accept the tender of a heart which has caused you no trouble to obtain, as gladly acquire one you have long and earnestly sought with assiduity.

Ah, Miss Emily! we see, by the turn of your favourite's countenance, that a negative awaits our proposition.

Had Clarissa been unprepossessed, Mrs. Lambert would have urged her acceptance of a son of Sir William Eldred, whose character was amiable, and whose fortune was adequate; but she did not press her to favour him, because she thought it would be unjust, as, could she have prevailed, it would only have been on account of situation, her heart, as the good lady was convinced, being rivetted to Mr. Addington. Miss Emily Minifer will be pleased to observe that this was a case perfectly opposite to any which she ever stated in controversy.

At the time of Lady Laura's entering the Park, Clarissa Melville had passed through it on her way to the house of a lady, for whom she had finished a fire-screen the preceding evening, and was obliged to wait the appearance of the lady's maid. Had Laura not stopped so long at the door of Mrs. Saunders, she would have encountered Clarissa at the first gate. The act of drinking a glass of

of water prevented their meeting, as Clarissa, being on business, walked with quickness; Laura Warburton, intent only on enjoying the morning breeze, sauntered at leisure.

Leaving casuists to comment on this adverse circumstance, we will close the chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Park continued.—The little Bird.—The Apparitions.—Mrs. Lambert.

A treasure lost, and recovered, is deemed of tenfold value. We seldom form a due estimate of that of which we have always been possessed, and are in no fear of losing.

THE day broke with more than usual splendour; the sun gilded the spires of the Churches, and numberless little birds on the highest branches of the trees were hailing the return of day, as Laura breathed the salutary air.

Four times she measured the length of the park, and had laid her hand upon the gate through which she first entered, to return

return to the habitation of Mrs. Saunders, when a note of more than common melody vibrated in her ears.

"Sweet little chorister!" said Laura, looking around, "do you invite me to return? Thy matin shall be accompanied by a repetition of mine, for our mutual obligations to Him who heareth even *thy* song!"—and she followed the aerial warbler as he skimmed from tree to tree, till she lost him amongst the branches; but she thought she would walk once more to the opposite gate.

Casting her eyes around, she saw a female form enter the avenue.

It was Clarissa Melville.

Say now, Oh ye casuists in Theology! did this meeting and all its train of consequences depend upon the accidental chirping of a little bird? Laura Warburton was very careful not to expose herself in the streets or walks near the metropolis, lest she should meet with any of her former acquaintance, from whose

recognition, whenever she *did* appear, she sedulously guarded herself by a veil or large hood; and she might for years have lived in the same town with Clarissa unknown, had they now missed each other. Say then, did chance, or what, effect this important encounter? Had not the tuneful feathered animal invited her return, would she have lived in ignorance of her friend's existence? Did the fate of these two amiable and suffering individuals depend upon the trivial incident we have related?

Ah, no! It cannot be believed it did, by persons who have the power of exercising the faculty of reason, except they strangely pervert that great and peculiar privilege: much less can students in Christianity, whose Leader says that not even sparrows fall without permission, preclude that all-consoling thought, that mortals are the immediate care of Providence.

Laura was struck with the elegance of the

the form at the end of the walk, and her heart beat quick; for it awakened indistinct sensations in her breast. The figure was familiar to her senses, yet she thought not of Clarissa.

Clarissa was likewise agitated.

"What a lovely appearance!" said she to herself. "How much like Laura Warburton!"—and she deeply sighed.

It was not more than ten days that she had wept over her imaginary grave, and retrospected the comparative happiness of her situation, had the friend of her heart been then in sublunary existence.

They approached nearer.

They started.

They approached nearer still.

They were terrified. Each thought she beheld the supernatural resemblance of the other.

They stopped, and stood gazing in silence. Six years of separation had caused but little alteration in the figure which early

early affection had indelibly impressed on the heart of each fair friend.

"Gracious powers!" exclaimed Clarissa, at the same moment that Laura uttered—

"Protecting angels!"

"Whom do I see!!" added both in one instant.

"It must be!"

"It is!" and they impulsively rushed into each other's arms, though they were alike in dread of clasping a shadow.

At that juncture a sentinel, just then relieved, crossed near the almost fainting friends, who were only saved by a tree from falling to the ground. Perceiving their situation, he approached, and offered some assistance, which excited their recollection, and they suffered themselves to be conducted to a bench. The enquiries of the soldier gave still longer time for their regaining some presence of mind; and on his departure, after again throwing their arms round each other, they pro-

posed to leave the park before they entered upon any elucidation of the circumstances by which they had both been so astonishingly deceived.

"Shall we," asked Clarissa, "go to your home, or to mine?"

"Alas!" replied Lady Laura, "I have no home to go to!"

"No home!!" repeated her friend, with the strongest tokens of surprise. But, checking her emotion—

"Then come with me, and you shall find one."—And arm in arm, with hearts so filled with joy at the recovery of each other, as for a period to banish a sense of the grief arising from other circumstances, they quitted the park, and calling a coach, were driven to the friendly dwelling of Mrs. Lambert.

FRIENDSHIP! prostituted word!—thou, in thy genuine sense, art a balm of the most sovereign influence. The bosom inhabited by thee, can never know unqualified distress. By thy powerful aid, sorrow

sorrow is softened, till the sense of it is almost lost in participation; but without thee, what is sublunary happiness! A name! A selfish soul can never know felicity; for solitary bliss was never made for man.

We had a friend!—we know the joys of friendship! And, but that the soul we loved, is now in realms of light, should still deplore the loss.

Are there amongst our readers such as turn the eye of scorn upon this tribute to the memory of that friend? Then let them shut the hallowed page. Their souls, unkindred, can never understand our language; and all we can allow them is the tribute of a pitying sigh.

Those who are versed in the sacred science, will readily enter into the sensations which swelled the bosoms of our lovely young favourites. Their looks, for language seemed denied them, expressed unutterable sentiments, and tears aided the silent eloquence.

 When

When the coach stopped, Mrs. Lambert went to the door, upon which Clarissa said—

"My dear Madam, I bring you a friend who is lately restored to me, being assured she would here find a sincere welcome."

Mrs. Lambert made a smiling and maternal reply as she ushered them into a neat little room, where breakfast had previously been prepared.

During the repast, Clarissa informed Lady Laura of all the events relative to herself, which we have before recorded, to the great astonishment and concern of her attentive friend, who, as well from Clarissa's account, as from her own observation, imbibed such sentiments of respect and esteem for Mrs. Lambert, that she would not impose herself upon her in an assumed character, but proposed, if she would favour her with her attention, to relate to Clarissa, in her presence, the incidents of her life since the death of

her grandfather. Mrs. Lambert thanked her for the proof of her good opinion, and she gave a succinct account of her former and present circumstances.

The detail of Lady Laura could not fail of procuring her a new friend in the generous Mrs. Lambert, who instantly proposed her continuing with *her* under the name of Eliza Howard, till the determination of affairs at Charing-Cross, and even after, if she preferred a residence with Miss Melville to a return to America; as she expressed her conviction that her assistance in their usual employ would be greatly beneficial to their little firm. Mrs. Lambert likewise promised to gain intelligence of the events in which Lady Laura was so materially concerned; as she had an acquaintance living opposite the house of Mr. Woodville, who could easily obtain notice of that gentleman's return from confinement.

Lady Laura threw her arms round her new benefactress, and expressed a high

sense of her generosity and goodness; and the worthy gentlewoman was so charmed with the acquisition to her family, that her only apprehension was Mrs. Woodville's claiming her promise of educating the children: for Lady Laura had not left untold one circumstance with which she thought her friends ought to be made acquainted.

After this, Laura and Clarissa retired to talk more particularly of affairs, in which they were mutually interested, and enjoyed that unrestrained interchange of sentiment which souls congenial experience with rapture after a separation; and then, by Mrs. Lambert's advice, walked to Mrs. Saunders's, from whence, thanking the lady for the care of her trunk, they took a coach, and returned to their destined habitation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The fair Embroiderers.

It must be a dreadful certainty that is not preferable to the expectation of its arrival. While the mind is in suspense, it sickens and enervates. When it knows the worst, it summons its powers to contend with the inevitable event.

MRS. Lambert would not permit her children, as she termed them, to begin any work till the morning which succeeded their restoration to each other, being determined, she said, to celebrate their reunion; but in the evening she herself went to the house of Mrs. Swaine, who lived

lived opposite to Mr. Woodville's, and enquired if she knew any thing of the family on the other side the street.

Mrs. Swaine said yes; the sister of her servant lived with Mrs. Woodville, and she understood the family were in a very distressed situation.

Mrs. Lambert then communicated as much of her design as was requisite to its effect, and received assurances from Mrs. Swaine that her request should not be neglected. The good gentlewoman then went to a milliner's near Bloomsbury Square, where she easily gained intelligence respecting the families of Messieurs Catchpole and Mullins, as the ladies, when in town, frequented that shop. At that juncture she was informed they were at Clarendon Castle, on account of the health of one of Mrs. Mullins's children; and it was believed they would not return till the end of the year, as the country would soon grow inviting.

With this intelligence Mrs. Lambert returned to her young friends, the recital of which, though there was nothing in it interesting, drew a sigh from Laura Warburton, and she faintly repeated—"*Clarendon Castle!*"

In the morning our heroine produced her work and drawings, the execution of which greatly surprised her benefactress. In productions of the *needle* Clarissa Melville could not be excelled; but the pencil of Laura Warburton was superior to any thing Mrs. Lambert ever beheld. Her patterns for embroidery, and her flower-pieces, created admiration; but her miniature portraits exceeded all the rest. Amongst these, her grandfather, Mr. Jervois, and Clarissa Melville, shone distinguished as incomparable resemblances, finely executed. Mrs. Lambert advised the cultivation of this talent, expressing her opinion of its being probable that it would in time be greatly lucrative; but their first undertaking was a set of chairs

 for

for a woman of quality, which were all to be of different patterns; and Mrs. Lambert had expressed her apprehensions of its being difficult to have them properly drawn, as Clarissa did not pretend to excel in that art. Laura therefore gave all the designs, and rendered the execution of the work particularly easy, by her inimitable method of shading.

Several days passed in this employ without any interrupting intelligence from Mrs. Swaine, of whom Mrs. Lambert made frequent enquiries respecting the Woodvilles. All that could be gathered was, that it was expected Mr. Conyers would soon be married to a lady *who would pay Mr. Woodville's debts*—that being the idea imbibed by the sister waiting-maids. Mrs. Woodville's servant told the other that she was sure Mr. Conyers would rather have *Miss Howard*, who was "*the sweetest creature in the world,*" was the girl's eulogium upon our heroine.

This state of suspense was very distressing

to

to Lady Laura. She wished, she said, she could hear of Mr. Conyers's being absolutely married, as she should then endeavour to fix upon some plan for her future mode of life, the recovery of Clarissa Melville having abated her reluctance to reside in England. Could she have carried both her and Mrs. Lambert to the Western Continent, her determination would have been easy; but the idea of a second separation from her friend was torture. And how could that friend ungratefully leave her benefactress? Or how could she herself desert Mrs. Woodville, whom, next to Miss Melville, she loved of all women? And for Mrs. Lambert she had now justly imbibed the affection of a daughter.

Thus divided, she *almost* actually wished to hear of Mr. Conyers's marriage (which, however, would have been the most afflicting piece of intelligence she could have received), that she might endeavour to settle her fluctuating ideas, the present

state of irresolution being more distressing—at least she deemed it so—than even the certainty she expected.

On the third day of her residence with Mrs. Lambert, she had written a note to Mrs. Woodville, to inform her of her safety, and that she was situated not uncomfortably. She would not mention her meeting with Miss Melville, as she conceived it would convey an idea of her being capable of gladness; as she could not speak of it in indifferent terms, while her friends at Charing Cross were under deep affliction.

How little is this delicacy observed even by delicate minds! Yet the want of it frequently occasions pain to those friends whom we wish to cheer by information of our own good fortune, while *they* are labouring under the rigours of their destiny.

It would be but small consolation to a starving traveller who stands at our door with his feet buried in snow, to see through the

the windows a scorching fire, and to be told that the family is going to sit down to a plentiful dinner.

It may be insisted upon that a *real friend* will rejoice in a friend's prosperity. That he will *endeavour* to do so, must certainly be admitted, and perhaps he may in part succeed; but still the light that is thrown upon another's fortune will inevitably deepen the gloom in which his own was previously involved.

Laura Warburton's note to Mrs. Woodville was expressive of every affectionate and every generous sentiment, and calculated to convey consolation to every part of the family. Mrs. Woodville perused it with real satisfaction; and, had she known where to address her, would have replied to it in corresponding language: yet still it increased her regrets at there being any impediment to her more immediate union with the family.

Lady Laura had been seven days under the protection of her new friend, and no

material

material information from Charing Cross, when Mrs. Lambert, seeing her anxiety increase, purposed going the next morning to the house of Mrs. Swaine, which she did, and returned with the following account.

Soon after she was seated in a little parlour which fronted the house of Mr. Woodville, she saw a handsome young man come out at the door, whom she judged to be Mr. Conyers; but in a few moments another appeared, who for elegance of figure surpassed any one she had ever seen. This, she was now informed, was Mr. Conyers, and the other Mr. Lloyd. Just after, Mrs. Woodville's servant came to request Mrs. Swaine to permit her sister to step over and take care of the children, while she went to the King's Bench to carry her master some clean linen.

Mrs. Lambert failed not to take this opportunity of enquiring of the girl, who seemed rather talkative, the circumstances

she

she was most solicitous to collect. Betty, who, not having been enjoined secrecy, thought herself at full liberty to answer the questions of such a civil gentlewoman, and one too who was acquainted with her sister's mistress, for such a relation has prodigious weight with this order of individuals; she therefore informed Mrs. Lambert that both her master and mistress had been much indisposed, but she hoped they would soon be better, as she believed Mr. Conyers was going to marry a great lady, who would set her master free; that she believed the wedding was to be next day, as she had heard Mr. Conyers talk about it to Mr. Lloyd, and she was going with some clean things to the prison; and her mistress had told Miss Maria, who had asked about her papa, that she hoped he would soon come home.

"Then you think, child, that Mr. Conyers is to be married to-morrow!" requestioned Mrs. Lambert, who was desirous to be perfect in the story.

"Yes, indeed, Madam, I am sure they are, for I heard Mr. Conyers tell Mr. Lloyd it *should* be *to-morrow morning*," returned Betty with increased certainty, as Mrs. Lambert seemed in her opinion to doubt her knowledge of the circumstance.

Betty was right in her intelligence, but it was prematurely founded upon a wrong premiss. She had heard, or rather *over*-heard, the *latter* part of the following speech from Mr. Conyers to Mr. Lloyd :—

"If it were possible for me to see this woman this day, I would not delay the marriage one moment beyond to-morrow morning."

This was sufficient. Betty thought herself hereupon authorized to pronounce Mr. Conyers was to be married the next day, though it was not till the evening of the morning in which she made her report, that the circumstance was determined upon by the parties most concerned.

Mrs.

Mrs. Lambert, thus fraught with information, returned to her children, and reported to the tremblingly attentive Laura Warburton every particular. While Mrs. Lambert was speaking, she sat in perfect silence, and then burst into a flood of tears.

" Now, now," she said, " I shall be easier: but I wish to-morrow were over."

Then leaning her face upon the bosom of Miss Melville, who supported her in her arms, she spoke not for several minutes; but at length raising her head, she said—

" Let us now go to work: if we are industrious, we shall finish this chair this evening. Heaven only knows what to-morrow may produce. I seem as if some great event was at hand, and it does not appear dismal. The comfort of such friends as I am blessed with, gives light to the deepest shade."

After this, she produced her drawing books,

books, to endeavour to find some new design for a bunch of flowers, that was to be placed in a conspicuous point of view in the piece Clarissa had begun; when the portrait of her grandfather met her eyes, and she said if she kept that in her eye, it would stimulate her fortitude.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Accident.—Mr. Smyth.—The Portrait.—Dialogues, and Arrangements.

As all human happiness is but comparative, none can be so truly grateful for prosperity, as those whom adversity has previously visited.

MRS. Lambert left our two young friends, to give orders about the business of the family, and then returned to assist their labours, which they agreed to continue uninterrupted through the day, and entered into some conversation respecting future plans.

Mrs. Lambert had received a promise from

from Mrs. Woodville's servant, that she would, by means of her sister, dispatch a messenger to her house with tidings of the wedding as soon as it was celebrated. Laura therefore hoped that that part of her trouble which was occasioned by suspense, would soon be ended ; yet she dreaded the confirmation, and seemed as if expecting the approach of some other great and unlooked-for event.

A pause now ensued, and every one was intent upon work, till Mrs. Lambert interrupted the silence by expressing her admiration of Laura's pencil and Clarissa's needle.

At this juncture, a bustle in the street occasioned their rising to explore the cause, when they perceived two carriages entangled with each other, and a portly elderly gentleman seemingly much hurt by one of the horses having trod upon his foot.

Mrs. Lambert, whose humanity was always alive, hastened down stairs, and offered

offered her assistance to the gentleman, which he thankfully accepted; and, by aid of the servant, easily got him into the house, as the hurt was upon the side of his foot, and did not, though it was painful, prevent his walking.

As soon as the gentleman, whose name was Smyth, was seated in an easy chair, an embrocation was procured, and the two young ladies alternately bathing the part affected, Mr. Smyth, who was extremely pleasant and facetious, declared he was better than he was before he was hurt, and that any man would gladly meet such an accident, to have the remedy administered by two such lovely young practitioners. He certainly, as every mortal must do who saw them, admired them both; but his eye rested longest upon Laura, whom he seemed to have an idea of having seen before: yet as he looked upon her as a daughter of Mrs. Lambert, he forbore to make any observation which wore the colour of enquiry.

After the operation of bathing, rubbing, &c. was over, Laura and Clarissa retired to perform the act of ablution; and during their absence, Mr. Smyth cast his eyes upon the drawing-book of our heroine, and asked his hostess to which of the young ladies it belonged.

"To Eliza," she replied, "who sat on your left hand."

Mr. Smyth turned over the leaves of the book, and saw the portrait of Mr. Warburton, upon which he started, and exclaimed—

"Gracious Heaven! who is this?!"

"It is Eliza's grandfather," replied Mrs. Lambert, not thinking of the consequence.

"Her grandfather, Madam!—What, pray tell me, was his name?" asked Mr. Smyth, with an earnest quickness.

"Warburton, Sir," with embarrassment and an affected carelessness, replied the lady, now conscious of having said too much, and endeavouring to think of something

something to avert the subject; at which moment Clarissa and Lady Laura entered the room.

"Warburton!" exclaimed the gentleman with warmth and wonder, not heeding the entrance of the ladies, who stopped at hearing the name—"*My old friend, Phil. Warburton, of Bloomsbury?!!*

No one made a reply, but the face of Lady Laura was of a deathlike paleness.

"My dear child," said Mr. Smyth, "Mrs. Lambert tells me the original of this portrait was *your grandfather*, and that his name was *Warburton*. Did he live in Bloomsbury Square?"

Laura covered her face with her handkerchief, and burst into tears.

"I do not wish, young lady, to afflict you. The very striking resemblance this portrait bears to my much-respected friend, leaves no doubt of his being the intended original; but how is it possible you can be his descendant? He had many children, but none that were ever married, except

except Lady Rushbrooke, Mrs. Catchpole, and Mrs. Mullins. Lydia and Penelope indeed——Perhaps some youthful imprudence!——It must be so. You bear a strong resemblance to the family. I thought, when I looked at you, that I had before seen you somewhere. Tell me, child, which of the two ladies last mentioned was your mother?"

"Oh, neither, neither," exclaimed Laura, in a confusion of grief, as she walked about the room. "Let me not implicate the innocent! Neither, Sir, indeed, of the two ladies last mentioned."

"How then, young woman, can you be a grand-daughter of my old friend? Your appearance precludes every illiberal conjecture. You cannot be an impostor: tell me then——"

"Oh Sir!" cried Laura, interrupting him, "I am not a guilty creature. Duty to these my friends impels me to assert my innocence: yet how can I criminate my mother!——Why, my dear Madam, did

did you mention the name of Warburton! But it cannot be recalled, and *I will be just.*—My mother, Sir, was known to the world as Lady Rushbrooke. After this, ask no more questions, and promise that you never will mention the circumstance of having seen such a desolated creature as this before you."

"What can this mean?" asked Mr. Smyth. "Your mother Lady Rushbrooke! Why then are you in this situation? But sure you err! The daughter of the lady whom you mention, lies in the burying-ground of Bloomsbury parish."

"Oh! no, no!" cried Lady Laura, "the tale is false. But let me live unknown. Leave me to my destiny, and let me die in peace!"

"You demand," replied the gentleman, "an utter impossibility. Having heard thus much, I *will* know more. What have you done to be thus expelled your honours and estates?"

"Nothing, nothing," she replied with

 streaming

streaming eyes; "it was no fault of mine. Yet, Oh! if only the truth *will* silence you—I am, indeed, the daughter of Lord Rushbrooke, but he never was married to my mother!"

"Lord Rushbrooke never married to your mother!" repeated Mr. Smyth in a tone expressive of contempt for the assertion. "Who told you such a slanderous tale? I myself was your mother's nuptial father. These hands, in consequence of an early promise, gave her to her husband at the altar, in presence of Mrs. Cullum, Mr. Warburton, and Miss Redman, in Bloomsbury Parish Church, where Arnold Catchpole is now Curate.

"Oh!" said the agitated beauty, dropping on one knee at his feet, and clasping her uplifted hands, "Oh! I dare not, I dare not—— Pardon me—pardon me, Sir—I dare not believe you! I have now by me, under the hands of my father, a contrary confession. Oh! forgive,

forgive, forgive my incredulity !"—and sunk upon the floor.

Mr. Smyth was greatly affected ; and in an agitated tone of voice, while Mrs. Lambert and Miss Melville were lifting her to a seat, said—" Tell me the name of this young lady whom you call Eliza."

A look from Mrs. Lambert asked Clarissa to reply to Mr. Smyth's interrogation.

" It is Lady Laura Elizabeth Warburton, Sir, whom I have known from infancy. *My* name is Clarissa Melville. My father, now in the West Indies, once lived in London, in which period I was a constant visitor at the house of Mr. Warburton in Bloomsbury Square?"

" Melville, my dear ! Are you the daughter of Osbourn Melville, of Piccadilly ?"

" I am, Sir. Did you know my father ?"

" I did. But I am impatient to be told how the daughter of Lord Rushbrooke became an inhabitant of this dwelling."

Lady Laura requesting to withdraw while the particulars were relating, the servant was summoned to attend her into a more airy room, where she desired to be left by herself.

"This stupid author is going to insinuate that the girl *said her prayers*, as the good people call it," exclaims Captain Modish. "I am quite sick of these pious heroines, who are so horridly Gothic as to be for ever deducing arguments from common occurrences, to prove the eligibility of our being incessantly thankful for the good *chances* which befal us. I wish Heaven would be pleased to make me a General, and then I would give thanks as well as other people; but it should be with a bumper of good old port in my hand. I would drink Heaven's health with the best of them upon such a thankful occasion.

"And I would pray six times a day," laughingly replied Bontonnetta, "if by praying,

praying, I could obtain a coronet. As to returning thanks for it, I would postpone that piece of decorum till my receipt of the next favour, as Lady Lurchem does after her accouchements."

We are sorry to expose so exalted a character as Lady Laura Elizabeth Warburton to the derision of Bontonnetta and the noble Captain; but having enlisted under the banners of Truth, we are not hardy enough to fly from our colours, lest we suffer the punishment of a deserter, which is rather unpalatable to the delicacy of our taste. Great as is the mortification of rendering ourselves liable to the lash of such elegant and spirited criticism, we prefer a candid confession of the fact, which is—that our high-born heroine bent her right honourable knees, and returned her Ladyship's thanks for what she deemed the mercy she had experienced.

But we will close the scene as fast as possible, and return to the little room, where Miss Melville, assisted by Mrs.

 Lambert,

Lambert, recited every material circumstance of their young friend's degradation; upon which Mr. Smyth, in defiance of the pain in his foot, stamped about the room in a paroxysm of rage. His language was too violent to appear in these pages.

"That —— —— Catchpole!—that —— —— Mullins, are two of the most infamous, diabolical —— that ever scandalized the form of man!" were some of the execrations forced from his lips by passion. For a considerable period his transport scorned all bounds; but at length submitting to attend to some farther elucidating particulars, he reseated himself in the easy chair; and Clarissa, stepping out, returned with Lady Laura and the parcel of manuscripts, which, with her drawings, and a few other particulars, she had sedulously preserved through all the changes of her destiny.

Mr. Smyth received our heroine in his arms with transport, which she returned with

with the most affectionate expressions of obligation and gratitude; and the gentleman now requested Mrs. Lambert to procure a messenger to go with a summons to Mr. Jervois.

"To Mr. Jervois, Sir!" exclaimed Lady Laura. "Heavens! Mr. Jervois died in the East Indies before I was sent from England!"

"Who told you so?"

"I heard it at my uncle Catchpole's."

"Another precious piece of roguery! But never again let me hear you call the rascal uncle!"

Mr. Jervois was now summoned by a note from Mr. Smyth, importing his having met with an accident at the house of Mrs. Lambert, to which he requested he would permit himself to be conducted by the bearer without delay, as business of the utmost consequence demanded his immediate presence.

Previous to the arrival of the gentleman above mentioned, Mr. Smyth asked Lady

Laura if she had no remembrance of himself; adding, with a smile, he hoped she would compliment him with some degree of recollection, or he should think himself a very old man grown out of knowledge.

"Bless me!" said she, looking at him with earnestness and surprise, "sure you are not the gentleman whom I used to call papa Phipps!"

"The very same!" replied he, quite delighted with the recognition. "I left England when you were very young; and after staying some time in Spain, went to the East Indies, where I continued till the return of my friend Jervois, whom I accompanied to this dear little island; and upon our arrival in the metropolis, that —— —— villain Catchpole came and gave the information of your death to your guardian, which affected the good man even to tears, as he had fondly indulged the idea of spending a con-

a considerable portion of his time with you at Clarendon Castle."

Laura's eyes again overflowed at this instance of kindness from her guardian, whom she had always loved with a truly filial affection; and so earnestly was this little party engaged in interesting topics, that Lady Laura had not notice to withdraw, as it was intended she should do, to prevent a too sudden surprise, before the door was thrown open, and Mr. Jervois appeared. When he first entered, Mr. Smyth, for whom the note had caused an anxiety, caught his eyes, and he was advancing to him, when Laura Warburton struck his sight. He knew her in a moment, and stood aghast.

"Gracious Heaven! is it possible!" said he, and looked around, till Laura, no longer to be restrained, advanced to him with open arms. He pressed her to his bosom with transport, and the cheeks of both were bedewed with tears; but the amazement which united with the joy of

Mr. Jervois, created an eagerness for the elucidation of the mystery of her reported death and present appearance; yet still he seemed unwilling to part with her from his arms, in which she continued encircled. At length they separated, and Mr. Jervois recognised Clarissa Melville, whom he perfectly remembered, and likewise believed had departed from this state of being. Mrs. Lambert was then presented as the young friends' kind protectress; after which, the little party arranged themselves for a recapitulation of the material events which had marked the last five or six years of the life of Laura Warburton.

It is needless to repeat the effect which the story had upon Mr. Jervois: the reader will readily form the conjecture. Every good passion was in arms, and his affection for the child of his adoption deeply wounded. It was a considerable time after the relation was given, which was done in as few words as possible, before

before Mr. Jervois was sufficiently composed to either read, or hear read, the letters which were now produced.

"And did this impudent fellow exhibit this as the writing of your father?" asked Mr. Smyth, in a renewal of passion.

"He did, Sir," replied Lady Laura; "and till this day I always believed it to be his."

"I never knew so impudent a forgery!" returned the other. "Lord Rushbrooke, you must remember, Sir, wrote a very careless and almost unintelligible hand; whereas this appears to be the production of a schoolmaster."

Mr. Jervois confirmed the observation, and they proceeded to examine the rest of the papers, which excited equal astonishment and abhorrence; but when Laura produced the letters and other manuscripts found in the box of Humphrey Catchpole, which clearly demonstrated the murderous intention of Lady Laura's relations, who, from subsequent

circumstances, it was likewise equally evident, concluded the horrid deed was executed,—grief, unaffected and sincere, for the crimes of the offenders, took place of every angry passion. Mr. Jervois lamented that the descendants of his worthy and respectable friend, who had so carefully superintended their education, should have fallen into so dreadful an abyss.

From memoranda found in the common-place book, or rather journal of Humphrey Catchpole, who, in our prior account of him, we have observed was remarkably particular and accurate in all his data, the whole horrible transaction stood evinced. Nor was his own intention to conspire against the conspirators, and marry Laura Warburton, less demonstrable, not doubting but her destitute situation would make her rejoice at such an offer of protection.

It was long before Mr. Jervois was sufficiently recovered from the effects of the preceding discoveries, for any one to

think

think of dining; but at length Mrs. Lambert requested the gentlemen to accept a collation, and the little party sat down to a table, where the spirit of hospitality presided, and where the guests were united by every social affection.

After dinner, while they were partaking of some fruit and wine, the characters of Laura's protecting friends in New York were more amply discussed; and when Mr. Jervois understood that the family name of Mr. Woodville was Conyers, he perfectly recollected him, remembered his going to America, and said he had heard him celebrated for unimpeachable integrity and generosity. The circumstances under which he laboured, were then more particularly developed; and Laura said that as she was determined to reinstate the family, she wished his enlargement to be procured as speedily as possible.

"I shall be of age next Tuesday," said she, with a smile, "and I think you will take my word till then for ten thousand pounds."

"For a hundred thousand," replied Mr. Jervois; "and to-morrow your benefactor shall be at liberty to rejoice his family with his presence."

"To-morrow," said she, with an unsteady, blushing countenance, "he will be liberated without our assistance. Mr. Conyers intends—Mr. Conyers——"

She could say no more.

Mrs. Lambert, observing her confusion, said, with a smiling countenance—

"Lady Laura, you have honoured me by calling yourself my daughter. Will you, my dear, trust into your mother's hands those manuscripts you permitted Miss Melville to read to me last night?" meaning some letters Mr. Conyers had written to *Miss Howard.*

She blushed still deeper, but said nothing.

Mrs. Lambert enforced her question.

"I cannot refuse any thing to you, Madam," she replied, rising from her seat; and asking Clarissa to attend her

into

into the next apartment, gave her the letters, and desired to be summoned when they were perused.

Being convinced of the honour and generosity of Mr. Conyers and his family, both Mr Smyth and Mr. Jervois thought the young merchant merited the hand and fortune of even Laura Warburton; and the gentleman first mentioned, filled a bumper, and drank to their speedy union.

When our heroine returned, Mr. Jervois asked her what, besides releasing Mr. Woodville, she intended to do for the family.

"So well do I know your justice and generosity," she replied, "that I think I shall not hesitate to abide by your decision."

"But suppose I enjoin you to give yourself to Mr. Conyers!"

"I will try to obey you, Sir, if you will promise to consider my compliance as an act of duty to my guardian."

After this little pleasantry, Mr. Jervois enquired

enquired why she did not acquaint the Woodvilles with her history."

She gave him the reasons we have previously given to the reader.

Mr. Jervois.—And did you mean to take the name of Conyers under that of Eliza Howard?

Lady Laura.—Certainly not. I had written, as I will at some time shew you, the particulars of my situation, which a change in Mr. Woodvillee's ircumstances prevented me from sending, as I intended, to Mr. Conyers.

Mr. Jervois.—Their circumstances at the time of your introduction to them, were very flourishing, I presume?

Lady Laura.—Very high indeed.

Mr. Jervois.—Yet they made no objection to receive you into their family as a relation?

Lady Laura.—Not the least.

Mr. Jervois.—Had they not an idea of your being entitled to some property in this island?

 Lady

Lady Laura.—It was impossible that they should. They thought me an outcast from my family, and were convinced I had not one shilling, nor a garment that was not the gift of their generosity.

Mr. Smyth.—Noble!—upon my soul, noble! They merit reward!

Mr. Jervois.—Indeed they do, and I trust they will receive a high one.

Mrs. Lambert.—Mr. Lloyd, I think, my dear Lady Laura, was likewise your very cordial friend?

Lady Laura.—Indeed he was. No sister can esteem a brother more than I do Mr. Lloyd.

Mr. Smyth.—And how can *he* be rewarded for his friendship?

Lady Laura.—I doubt not but he will find his happiness in the recovered prosperity of Mr. Woodville's family, and in taking, jointly with Albert, the business of the firm.

Clarissa.—And who, pray, is to reward Mrs. Jodrell?—That horrid woman, my dear Laura, raises my indignation beyond expressing.

expressing. Let me be sent to tell her Mr. Conyers has escaped her den. Do you know, gentlemen, that she expects to be married to-morrow morning to the man whom you deem deserving of our lovely friend!

Mr. Jervois.—To-morrow morning! Are you sure of that?

Mrs. Lambert.—If my intelligence be true, which I have no reason to suspect, to-morrow morning is the destined fatal period.

It was now related to the gentlemen how strongly Mr. Woodville prohibited the sacrifice which Mr. Conyers determined upon making to ransom his father; and the merits of every individual in the family were set in their proper point of view. The gentlemen hereupon resolved on that plan of conduct which in the ensuing pages the reader will see exhibited. When they understood that Mr. Ravensford had many years been Mr. Woodville's banker, their path was obvious.

CHAP. VIII.

The Guardian's Visit to the King's Bench.—Mr. Woodville released.—His return to Charing Cross.

A day spent in an amusing manner seems short, because the incidents of the moment leave no impression. If the same period is passed in the extremes of either pain or pleasure, it appears to be protracted; because every incident is so strongly marked by interesting circumstances, that the memory is filled.

HAVING secured intelligence of Mr. Ravensford's being at home, our gentlemen, after an early cup of coffee, called upon the son of the good lawyer, whom General Burgoyne celebrates under the name of Rightly, but whose real name was

was Hasselman, and carried him with them to the house of the banker, with whom Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth had for years been intimate. Preliminaries explained, they proceeded to the King's Bench, and giving ample securities, the liberty of Mr. Woodville was pronounced; upon which Mr. Ravensford and Mr. Hasselman returned to their respective habitations, and Messieurs Jervois and Smyth sent up a request to see the gentleman, who was at that time attended by Mrs. Woodville.

The message produced surprise, but the request received an affirmative.

After introductory ceremonials, Mr. Jervois began.

"If we have not been misinformed, Sir, you are detained at the suit of the widow of the late Mr. Jodrell, of Ludgate Hill?

Mr. Woodville.—I am, Sir.

Mr. Smyth.—For payment of a bond

of

of ten thousand pounds, which you aver to have cancelled?

Mr. Woodville.—Your information, gentlemen, is perfectly accurate. I will attest the truth of the circumstances with every solemnity that can be attached to an oath.

Mr. Jervois.—Mrs. Jodrell, I am told, agrees to sink her claim with her name, if Mr. Conyers will accept her offered affection?

Mr. Woodville.—She does; but I cannot consent to such a sacrifice.

Mr. Smyth.—Cannot *you*, Madam, prevail with Mr. Woodville to give his approbation to such a measure?

Mrs. Woodville.—No, Sir, nor can I give mine. Charles Conyers is of too much worth to be so thrown away, even was his affection disengaged.

Mr. Smyth.—And is it not? Has he not a heart to offer?

Mrs. Woodville.—No; it is disposed of to a woman of the highest merit, to one almost

almost equally dear to his whole family. But will you excuse my asking to what these interrogations tend ?"

Mr. Jervois.—Your question, my dear lady, is perfectly proper; yet indulge us a few minutes longer. I trust you will find your account in a compliance. Has the lady who is favoured with the friendship of your family, a fortune of sufficient consequence to assist the retrieval of its independence?

Mrs. Woodville.—She has not; but she is a fortune in herself.

Mr. Woodville.—She has every excellence that can dignify the character of woman.

Mr. Smyth.—One more question of you, Madam. Is Mr. Conyers much attached to this young lady?

Mrs. Woodville.—If my situation could afford a smile, your question would produce one. I never observed affection more fervent and exalted than that which

Charles

Charles Conyers entertains for Eliza Howard.

Mr. Smyth.—And you wish their union, though the consequence would be Mr. Woodville's continued confinement?

Mrs. Woodville.—What reply can I make! Did the result depend upon my breath, I would give your question an affirmative; though perhaps, when the event was over, I should lament its consequence.

Mr. Jervois.—Excellent Mrs. Woodville! You shall no longer be kept in suspense: your generosity and candour merit the reward they shall soon receive.—You, Sir, I think, have refused to be liberated by your son's union with Mrs. Jodrell?

Mr. Woodville.—Or I should be unworthy the blessing of liberty. Mrs. Woodville has not uttered a syllable, to which I do not subscribe, except regretting the *consequence* of my son's union with Miss Howard.

Mr. Jervois.—Enough, my dear Sir. We

We are (I can answer for my friend) perfectly satisfied with all we have heard. The night draws on; I shall therefore be brief, as I am convinced you have sufficient greatness of mind to stand a sudden gust of prosperity. You are at liberty to leave this place when you please. This gentleman, myself, and one other, have entered into recognisances. Your son, which I believe you did not know, has bound himself to redeem you to-morrow: your return will therefore free *him* from a slavery worse than imprisonment.

Mr. Woodville was attempting a reply, when the attention of the company was arrested by an audible sigh; and, turning round, Mrs. Woodville was perceived leaning against the wall, and just sinking upon the floor. Mr. Woodville sprang, and caught her; but it was some moments before she recovered sensibility. At length—

"Who—who *are* you, Sirs, that thus

kill

kill by making happy! Shall my children *this* night see their father! I *have* been enabled to endure misfortune, but joy destroys me!"

Mr. Woodville now regained his power of speech, and much was said on all sides becoming the occasion: after which, all pecuniary demands were satisfied, and our two gentlemen took Mr. and Mrs. Woodville into their coach that was waiting, and arrived at Charing-Cross just as Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Conyers, as related in the third chapter of this volume, had seated themselves in silence at the supper-table.

The stopping of a coach, and a loud rap at the door, awakened our young gentlemen from a kind of stupor; and hearing Mr. Woodville's voice in the hall, Mr. Conyers rushed through the passage, and catching him in his arms, cried—

"Welcome home, my father! My father, welcome!"

"Mr. Lloyd followed his example, and the house was a scene of joy. After it

was in some degree subsided, Mr. Woodville presented the two gentlemen, Mr. Jérvois and Mr. Smyth, but not by name, they having told him that at present he must submit to remain in ignorance of that particular.

Mr. Conyers, who concluded them to be agents of Mrs. Jodrell, was sufficiently generous to acknowledge obligation for the speedy measures she had taken to release his father, upon which Mr. Smyth smilingly said—" Suppress your gratitude, my worthy young friend, for the widow's supposed urbanity. The act you attribute to her kindness will not, I presume, meet with any great share of her approbation. It is no less our happiness to free *you*, than to liberate your father."

" How, Sir! What! Free me! Free me from Mrs. Jodrell, and yet give my father liberty!! Impossible! How!—which way! What, gentlemen, do you mean!"

" At present excuse us, Sir," said Mr.

Mr. Jervois, "and suffer us to leave you to congratulate each other on an event in which we are only agents."

"Oh my dear gentlemen! do not leave us without saying when you will see us again," said the enraptured Mrs. Woodville.

"Often, I hope, my good lady, to have that pleasure; but we cannot at present fix the time for our next visit."

Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth now returned to their coach, leaving the wondering family to rejoice, and recount interesting particulars.

During the absence of the gentlemen, Mrs. Lambert, Laura Warburton, and Clarissa had experienced happiness of no common kind. Their gratitude was raised to the First Great Cause, and acknowledged in suitable expressions.

"Now, my dear friends," said Laura, "you will consider Clarendon Castle as your future home. And let me be early in reminding you, Clarissa, that Mr.

 Woodville,

Woodville, Mr. Conyers, and Mr. Lloyd have connexions in almost every part of the habitable world, and that *no* pains, *no* expence will be spared to find Mr. Addington; nor when found, to fix you both in a situation equal to your highest wishes."

"*One* of the greatest delights," replied Miss Melville, "that my soul, while it continues in its present mode of existence, is capable to experience, is your restoration to my affection. Ought I then not to be satisfied! Ought I to expect the grant of *every* prayer! Yet I own my heart is sanguine, and that I feel my hope revive."

In this kind of conversation, Mrs. Lambert enjoying the felicity of her children, did our ladies pass the time of the gentlemen's absence, who, when they returned, gave additional joy, by recapitulating the circumstances of their embassage, and declaring themselves charmed with all the family at Charing Cross.

Laura wept and smiled alternately throughout the relation; and when it was ended, returned her thanks for their kindness with inimitable grace.

Mr. Jervois averred that for face, form, and figure, Mr. Conyers exceeded every mortal he ever beheld, and that his manners would dignify a Ducal coronet. Laura was highly gratified by this compliment (in which Mr. Smyth warmly joined) to the man whom she loved above all others; and, with a glowing cheek, she listened in silence to his praises.

Mrs. Lambert was too intent upon other circumstances, to give any portion of the day to domestic occurrences, therefore ordered an elegant little supper from a confectioner's; and at a late hour, Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth left Mrs. Lambert, Laura Warburton, and Clarissa Melville, with a promise of seeing them next day to fix upon other arrangements; and the ladies retired to repose.

CHAP. IX.

A Prologue to the Tragi-comedy of Mrs. Jodrell.

Those who cringe to the great, will be arrogant to the small; as a coward, who dares not fight a man, will be cruel to what cannot withstand him.

WAS a hungry epicure, who values himself upon being arrived at the summit of perfection in the noble science of eating, to be taken from a table covered with turtle soup and venison, and placed at a board where the only fare was red herrings and bull-beef—was the attention of a musical amateur to be called from a favourite composition of Corelli, to the miserable

miserable performance of an itinerant fiddler—was a man of physic or of Theology to be summoned from his bed in a cold, dark night, while the rain rattled against his windows, and the storm howled in the chimney, with an expectation of feeling the pulse of a Countess, or of baptizing the new-born son of a Duke, to find himself conveyed to a roof-lorn cottage, where the wife of a beggar, or the child of a soldier, was the destined object of his office—what a degradation of feeling would the priest, the doctor, the musician, and the epicure experience! We therefore, while we compassionate our readers, demand commiseration for ourselves, in being obliged to leave theexalted personages with whom we have so many pages enjoyed the highest felicity, for beings so uncongenial to our nature as Mr. Palmingstead and Mrs. Jodrell: for be it known to our readers, that when we act in our official capacity, all our faults and follies—all the errors to which, as

sons of mortality, we may at other times be liable, lie dormant, and nothing but the most "*perfect perfection,*" nothing but the imperial dictates of TRUTH, can be found in our productions.

As Sovereigns, we can do no wrong. As Lawgivers, we cannot err. Infallible therefore in our nature, and spotless in our essence, the heterogeneous feculence of the Jodrells and Palmingsteads of the age cannot but offend and disgust our sensibility. However, destiny commands, and we must necessarily descend to scenes below the level of our conscious dignity; but that we may let ourselves down by easy degrees, we will speak a few sentences to Miss Biddy Perkins.

This young lady was the other day so good as to give us her opinion—we believe she intended it as advice—that we took too much upon ourselves—that less arrogance and more modesty would be *prettier*—that an humble, creeping, cringing petition to the public for lenient sentiments

and

and merciful strictures, exemplified in a preface to a work she had been skimming over, would be more likely to draw compassion from our readers, than the airs of consequence we are sometimes pleased to assume.

Miss Biddy was probably led into these sentiments by her then favourite hero, whose speeches she delighted to retail, and which, to do her justice, she repeated with that unblushing assurance, which is a striking trait in the assemblage of her accomplishments, as she terms a few unnecessary acquirements. Miss Biddy, however, is not entirely destitute of feminine virtues, neither does she want comprehension when her ideas are properly directed; we will therefore condescend to point her observation to this circumstance. The consequence we assume as an author, is of a nature perfectly different from that which she chuses to take upon her as an individual. We are not, indeed, so destitute of consciousness, even

in our own private character, as to reduce ourselves to her proper level; yet we have a considerable quantity of the modesty, diffidence, and humility she is pleased to recommend without practising; and had she a capacity to relish any *attempts*—to fall in with the style she advises—at humour, she would perceive the quality which she terms arrogance, to be only a harmless indulgence of a propensity to unintentionally-offending jocoseness. If indeed the young lady finds amongst the variety of dresses in our paper wardrobe, any cap—though it should be one with *bells*—which exactly fits her head, we beg she will put it on without any ceremonious apology, and wear it as long as it will suit her own private convenience.

And now, by this intermediate chapter, having humbled our ideas, we will make our visit to Ludgate-Hill.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Mrs. Jodrell preparing for her Wedding.—Successive Disappointments.—The Citron Water.—The Arrival of Mr. Lloyd.—Distraction.—Mrs. Jodrell's Marriage.

High expectations are frequently succeeded by great disappointments; wisdom will therefore always be provided against the defeat of hope.

MRS. Jodrell arose in the morning at an early hour, and arrayed herself with the nicest exactness. Every insignia of mourning was instantly laid aside, and her person decorated by all the juvenile fashionable colours of the season. An

abundance of deep-rose-ribbons streamed from her bushy head of strong sandy hair; and an enormous scarlet feather, fixed over her left ear, gave a considerable addition to her height. If you, Madam, wish to have her picture at full length, give yourself the trouble of reverting to the eighth chapter of our second volume, where Mrs. Jodrell will meet your view.

During the two hours in which Mrs. Kitty was ornamenting this lovely bride elect, she was considering the probability of her engaging the affection of Mr. Conyers (who, she wanted not to be told, did not see her Lady with the eyes of love) to as much effect as she had secured that of Mr. Palmingstead; and believing the meditated event inevitable, she began to be reconciled to a change of object, and did not exert the utmost of her power to render the bonny widow irresistible.

When the clock struck the hour of eight, Mrs. Jodrell, taking a last view of her figure, of which she had an exalted opinion,

opinion, in two or three looking-glasses, descended, to her breakfast room, where her best china was arranged in due order; and seating herself in an elegant attitude on a sofa which fronted the door, determined, as she thought the position a becoming one, to receive the impatiently expected bridegroom without rising.

For a short time, which to her seemed long, she sat without hearing any sound indicative of the appearance of him she termed her lover. Her heart palpitated, and her cheek varied its colour. At length, the distant rumbling of a coach saluted her ear. Her heart beat stronger, and the retired scarlet returned to ornament a face which in that respect did not stand in want of foreign assistance; indeed, so profuse had been Nature in bestowing this emblem of health, that there was no spot in her face which did not partake of its bounty.

The coach advanced—for a moment stopped, and went on. Another, and another,

another, and another, till her patience was exhausted, played with the same cruelty upon her sense of hearing; and Kitty was summoned to carry the agitated fair a glass of *citron*, as what would be least detrimental to the effluvia from her lips. As she was sipping the beverage, a rap at the door made her start, and some of the liquid overflowed its destined bounds.

"Take it away instantly!" said she, "or throw glass and all into the fire!"

Kitty obeyed, and the spirituous flame so alarmed the lady, that, unmindful of the elegance of her attitude, starting from the sofa, she ran towards the door, and in the fit of terror, had Mr. Conyers then entered, would have rushed into his arms. Mr. Conyers, however, appeared not: the cause of this discomposing incident was nothing more than the arrival of the baker with some hot French bread.

The lady, considerably disordered both in mind and dress, resumed her situation; and soon after, Mr. and Miss Webster,

her

her intended nuptial father and bride-maid, again disappointed her expectation of seeing Mr. Conyers. Rap after rap tortured her almost beyond the extent of her philosophic powers; and she was determining to send a messenger to Charing Cross, when another rap revived her hope, and——Mr. Lloyd was announced. The lady received the imaginary harbinger with all the smiles of bridal good humour, and desired him to be seated, when he told her he had a message to deliver, which perhaps she would chuse to receive in another apartment.

Foreboding something destructive to her happiness, she falteringly replied—

"Sir!—What—what! But I will attend you!"—And walking with looks of alarm into the next room, Mr. Lloyd delivered his embassy in the following words.

"I ought to have waited upon you, Madam, much earlier; and seeing you thus prepared, I feel in some degree concerned

concerned that I did not; but the return of Mr. Woodville last night to his family was a circumstance of such happiness, that we sat rejoicing in it till a very late hour: and being all really fatigued with the overflowing felicity *at such a crisis*, slept much longer than we intended. After this information, I need not add that Mr. Conyers cannot do himself the honour of attending you this morning."

And now, kind reader, do us the favour to spare any description of the ensuing scene, by exerting your ideas. Imagine you see and hear every thing expressive of rage and revenge, crying, scolding, storming, *swearing*, fits, and fury!—every extravagance displayed by the unhappy inhabitants of the Hospital of Bethlehem, alternately exhibited by Mrs. Jodrell, till she proceeded to such indecorous invectives, that Mr. Lloyd thought himself perfectly authorized to retire without any reply.

After he was gone, her rage was so inde-

indescribable, that Mr. and Miss Webster being informed by Kitty of the cause of her disarrangement, quitted the house. For two days she seemed to have lost her reason; during which, incoherent threatenings of revenge continually escaped her lips. On the third day she was more calm, but sullen. On the fourth, Mr. Palmingstead made his appearance; and receiving from Mrs. Kitty an account of what had passed, was almost as much discomposed as the lady had been. Mr. Woodville's release was not to be accounted for, as his intelligencer could not give him any particulars of the circumstance. Instantly, therefore, he hastened to the King's Bench, where he found that Mr. Jervois, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Ravensford had entered into recognisances; but no intimation, the apprehension of which had caused his alarm, of a suspicion of fraud. With more pleasure than he had entered, did he leave the prison; and returning to the house of Mrs. Jodrell, demanded

demanded to see her. His demand was answered, and in the period of an hour she was brought to attend to the reasoning of her attorney, who assured her that Mr. Woodville was as much in her power as ever, the gentlemen having only bound themselves for his *appearance* when called upon, and that the debt must eventually be paid.

"But still," said she, "I shall be disappointed in my dearest wishes; for except Mr. Woodville is in imprisonment, Charles Conyers never will consent——"

She stopped, and blushed, for this was the first time she had mentioned the scope of her design to Mr. Palmingstead, who, not chusing to understand her meaning half expressed, looked as if expecting the finish of the sentence.

At length, with much reluctance, she acknowledged her intention, and confessed the long predilection she had entertained for the son of Mr. Woodville.

As

As if out of breath with astonishment, then in [a tone sufficiently expressive of his pretended sentiments, said—

"Is it possible that Mrs. Jodrell, in the very prime of her life, with such a person, such accomplishments, and such a fortune, should determine to throw herself away upon a *boy*, who not only greatly misrates her endowments, and treats her with positive neglect, and even contempt, but who is, besides, in love with a girl in every respect her inferior, and to whom, if my intelligence, which is very seldom incorrect, is in this instance to be relied upon, he is already privately married! Why, my dear lady, would you not trust me with your design? Was it from generosity," continued he, with a well-drawn sigh, "for you must be generous in all you do, that you forbore to communicate the deeply distressing intelligence?—Alas! Heaven knows how greatly——But I wave all regard to my own interest when I am considering your's.

your's. Let me therefore represent to you the terrible dilemma into which you would probably have drawn yourself, had you, by giving your hand to this young Conyers, found yourself his *property*, while his heart was possessed by another, with whom, after the release of his father, and the possession of your fortune, he would doubtless have absconded to some distant clime, leaving you, while they were revelling upon your spoils, a disconsolate *married widow!*"

Starting at the well-drawn picture, which had all the features of probability, she uttered every expletive expressive of her fury that is to be found in an English vocabulary. Without attempting to stem the torrent, he suffered her to waste her rage in words, and then continued, with another sigh—

"How grieved, my dearest Madam, am I thus to distress you! Could you but know——But that you cannot—the superior nature of my attachment forbids

the

the discovery—what an interest, what a warm interest I take in all which concerns your welfare, you would pity me for my struggle between my regard for your happiness, and my sense of duty to personal concerns. Abstracted from my own too presumptuous wishes, permit me to represent the degrading idea of again involving yourself *in trade*, when so many *gentlemen* by estate, or by profession, which is tantamount, would glory in exalting you to a more elevated sphere—to a rank you surely were destined to adorn!"

> He spake, and ended with a downcast eye,
> While latent meaning labour'd in his breast.
> The fair his precepts scann'd, nor thought them wrong,
> But where the man to find who would exalt
> Her! Her doubts she spake. He answered with a sigh.

And now, reader, to leave our heroics, let us tell thee in plain, simple, sober language, that in a very few visits, Mr. Palmingstead prevailed. A fear of his betraying her respecting the former payment of the bond—a power of which he delicately

delicately hinted being possessed—her thirst for revenge—her desire of being made a *gentle*-woman—her wish to be again a *married* woman, with a very long train of equally cogent reasons, amongst which, that of despair to conquer the man she would have preferred, stood foremost, determined our merchant's relict to accept the humble tender of Lawyer Palmingstead; and in a very few days he endowed her with the rank of an attorney's lady, and condescended to accept her fortune.

As there is no character more respectable than that of an honest lawyer, there is no one more pernicious and detestable than that of a roguish one.

A gentleman was asked by a lady—we well remember the circumstance, as we were of the party—what was the reason that, when a woman was concerned in a robbery, it was generally attended by murder. The gentleman most gallantly replied, that "when Angels fell, they became dæmons;" or, in other words, to use

use an anti-climax, for what can be higher than the first comparison—" that the best things, when corrupted, become the worst."

With respect to gentlemen of the law—the literary General whilom mentioned, has so admirably contrasted an Alscript with a Rightly, that no subsequent exemplification can appear to advantage.

CHAP. XI.

Mr. Palmingstead waits upon Mr. Woodville.— Albert Conyers arrives in England.— The Lawyer confounded.

He that finds himself out of his path, will do wisely to return upon the first discovery of his mistake, lest by persevering in the wrong road, the diverging direction of erroneous steps should lead him to a dreadful distance from the place of destination and happiness.

SOON after the marriage of Mr. Palmingstead with Mrs. Jodrell, the gentleman began to consider what would be the most expeditious method of enforcing payment of the pretendedly uncancelled bond of the deceased merchant; and as his

his union with the widow had been solemnized with the utmost privacy, he deemed it most eligible still to act as the client of the lady. He therefore determined to offer himself to Mr. Woodville as a mediator, and to propose his immediately paying, or giving fresh security for eight of the ten thousand due upon the bond, if *Mrs. Jodrell*, from motives of compassion and generosity, *could be prevailed with* to enter into such a compromise.

Palmingstead doubted not but this proposal would be gladly accepted by the bondsmen, as well as by the principal: and rather than not settle the business privately, he would have abated still more of the terms; as, being convinced of the respectability of the gentlemen who had engaged in the affair, he did not relish appearing to support such a cause in Court. The torn bond had been nicely managed, and a plausible account given of its having been injured, with some other papers of consequence, on board the ship, by means of

 some

some moisture that had pervaded the trunk in which they were packed, and some gauze paper had been laid at the back to heal the wounds; but still the *character* of Mr. Woodville was against the charge, and he was apprehensive of his own fragile reputation.

Had the bond been in a perfectly sound condition, though he himself had received the obligation it enforced, he would not have scrupled to demand a duplicate of the payment; but the fractured condition of the paper, the oath of Mr. Woodville, supported by Mr. Jervois, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Ravensford in a Court of Equity, were circumstances too formidable to be wantonly encountered. After mature consideration, therefore, he waited upon our friends at Charing Cross, and with the semblance of disinterested kindness, gave in his proposition; but Mr. Woodville did not receive it with the gratitude Mr. Palmingstead expected. The lawyer at length, finding his remonstrances ineffectual,

ineffectual, assumed a loftier strain, and warned him to prepare for a more determined proceeding, when a servant entered with a note, which contained these words:—

"Albert Conyers presents his duty to his father and mother. To prevent their being surprised by his sudden appearance, he sends this note as his harbinger."

Mr. Woodville in astonishment read this aloud to the company, which, exclusive of Mr. Palmingstead, consisted of Mrs. Woodville, Mr. Conyers, and Mr. Lloyd, who were unanimous in the refusal of the offered accommodation.

While every one was expressing sentiments of surprise, the door, after a preparatory rap, was thrown open, and Albert appeared.

It will readily be imagined that a considerable portion of time was spent in mutual congratulations; during which, our lawyer sat in silent observation, determined, when the affectionate bustle should be subsided, to ask in resolute language a categorical and definitive reply; but before he had framed his speech, Mr. Woodville said—

"And now, Albert, let me ask what brings you thus unexpectedly to England?"

"This, my father," returned Albert with ardency, "this little piece of paper, which I would not trust to any other mortal conveyance. It is Mr. Jodrell's discharge of all obligations from our house, which, after searching every probable nook, I accidentally—no, providentially, discovered between the boards of the sliding partition in the cedar escritoir. This I trust will chase the clouds which have lately hung over us, and bring a return of our sunshine."

A glow

A glow of grateful joy pervaded every heart in the company, except that of Mr. Lawyer Palmingstead, who was necessitated to force a language repugnant to his sentiments, and join in the congratulations that flowed from one to another; but *Master of Arts* as he was, he was not such a proficient in the science, as to veil the chagrin which the *unlucky* discovery created.

Mr. Lloyd perceived the effect; and taking the paper which Albert had put into the hands of his father, said—

" Permit me, Sir, to read this valuable document to this gentleman, who, having so sedulously endeavoured to terminate this business by compromise, cannot fail of receiving great satisfaction in being convinced that no farther exertion on his part will be necessary."

With emphasis and exultation, Mr. Lloyd read Mr. Jodrell's acquittal, which was perfectly full and satisfactory.

Mr. Palmingstead requested to *look* at it.

Mr. Lloyd put it into his hands. He read, bowed, and returned it, saying its authenticity could not be doubted.

Mr. Woodville asked if he wished to take a copy of it for the perusal of his client. He said no; she would be perfectly satisfied from his representation.

"You will prepare her, Sir, to expect to hear from me on the subject of a false arrest, which you will readily grant must have been greatly injurious to the peace and health of my family, and the credit of the firm."

Mr. Palmingstead started, and said—"Sir!"

"You cannot be surprised," observed Mr. Conyers. "False imprisonment will certainly afford an action at law, especially when strong reasons may be adduced in favour of its having been known that the demand was unjust. The honour of a British merchant is not to be played upon with impunity."

"And have you any proofs, Sir, that the payment of the bond was known to Mrs. Jodrell?" asked Palmingstead.

"If we have, Sir," replied Mr. Woodville, "they are not to be produced in this Court. The other fact once proved, common circumstances, which would not amount to positive evidence, would be admitted as corroboration."

"Are you, Sir," asked Albert, with his native quickness, not having before attended much to Mr. Palmingstead, "Mrs. Jodrell's attorney?"

"I am, Sir?"

"And her husband likewise; or Mr. Ravensford, which I cannot believe, has misinformed me," replied Albert.

Palmingstead's assurance played the truant: the blood forsook his cheeks to strengthen his heart, which was quivering within his breast. His voice faltered, and his eyes appeared as if he was admiring the pattern of the carpet, though at the

instant he did not know whether the boards were covered.

Albert for a few moments stood viewing him with an air of ridicule, and then, bursting into a provoking laugh, said—

"Why, Lawyer, you cut a sorry figure for a bridegroom! Has the old girl vested her soul—that is to say her property in the hands of trustees, and left you only her carcase?"

Irritated by this sarcasm, Palmingstead collected his deranged ideas, and darting a furious look at Albert, said—

"Take care, Sir, how you glance an injury to my character. What is past, I forgive, and will send your father's complete discharge from the arrest;" when, without staying to hear the reply, he bowed one general round, and departed, leaving the happy family to renew their mutual congratulations, and talk over the interesting concerns of business.

Albert informed his friends that when he

he found Mr. Jodrell's receipt, he was frantic with joy; and a vessel being ready for sailing, he packed it in a box, with an intention of delivering it to the care of the Captain: but fear of its being again lost, and a consideration that the ship which was to convey that, could likewise carry him, he determined to cross the Atlantic with his treasure, and authorizing Mr. Beaumont to transact business during his absence, embarked the next morning; and going, upon his arrival in London, to the house of Mr. Ravensford, was by that gentleman made acquainted with the past and present situation of his father's family, and with the marriage of Mrs. Jodrell, which had been communicated to him by the Clergyman who performed the ceremony.

When Mr. Palmingstead returned to his bride, he reproached her with a sullen and haughty air for the dilemma into which she had drawn him, and for the default in her fortune, not only of the

ten thousand pounds, but of the damages for which Mr. Woodville would doubtless sue, and as certainly obtain. She answered with upbraidings for the smallness of *his* fortune, and the low ebb of his character. He replied with reflections on her age and ugliness; and thus their first quarrel and lasting antipathy commenced.

CHAP. XII.

Mr. Palmingstead compounds.—Kitty's Revenge on her Master.

A good man will punish villany, not from resentment, but for example.

THE morning after the arrival of Albert Conyers, Mr. Woodville waited upon Mr. Ravensford, and begged to be informed of the residence and inducement of the gentlemen who opened the doors of his prison, and acquainted him with what had passed between himself and Mr. Palmingstead; upon which Mr. Ravensford gave him

him a direction to Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth, but assured him he was an entire stranger to the motives of their conduct. Mr. Woodville expressed his wonder and gratitude for the interference of two strangers, without which every possibility of future happiness would have been excluded from himself, by the sacrifice of Charles Conyers, and then went to the respective houses of his two friends, who were both from home; but leaving a card, they called upon him next morning, in company with Mr. Ravensford, when the business relative to the arrest was entirely arranged. Mr. Woodville seemed almost inclined to let the affair subside; but his bondsmen insisted, upon a principle of equity, and for the sake of both warning and example, that he should sue for damages; and, to cut short such an unpleasing circumstance, Mr. Palmingstead was so much afraid of his scarred reputation, that after many unavailing efforts at an intimidating effrontery, he was so over-

over-awed by the superior consequence of his antagonists, that he agreed to sign full releases, and pay to Mr. Woodville the sum of five thousand pounds, to prevent a prosecution. After this transaction, our lawyer suffered his dislike of his bride to be obvious to every observing eye; and residing constantly at his chambers, seldom visited Ludgate Hill more than once in a week. Mrs. Kitty likewise found herself deceived by Mr. Palmingstead's professions of kindness; for her mistress, upon observing some undue familiarity between her and her master, dismissed the waiting gentlewoman soon after her marriage, and Mr. Palmingstead refused to listen to her complaints of ill usage. Kitty, however, determined to be revenged of both, commenced an illicit amour with the footman, and made oath in a Court of Justice, that her master was father to a child of which, some time after, she was delivered. And now, sincerely glad to take a final leave

leave of Mr. Palmingstead, his wife, and Mrs. Kitty, we will dismiss the trio, and conclude the chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

The maternal Behaviour of Mrs. Lambert.—The Guardians set off for Bath.—The Loss of Eliza lamented at Charing Cross.

If the intelligence of a friend's happiness occasions tears, it is a greater proof of affection than their being produced by a knowledge of his distress. A tender mind will grieve at the calamities of people in general; but it is for the prosperity of a *friend* only that the heart will be melted to such tender sympathy, as to weep for gladness.

OUR readers are become anxious for a farther account of Lady Laura Warburton, whose more particular affairs we did not chuse

chuse to unite with any thing relative to Mrs. Jodrell; we will therefore return to the evening in which we left her at Mrs. Lambert's in as much happiness as is consistent with a state of expectation.

Our ladies were on the point of retiring to repose, yet it was a considerable time before they submitted to the mandate of the somniferous Monarch, who is truly said to "*fly from woe, and light on lids unsullied with a tear*." But if people who are miserable, often in vain court his healing presence, those who are exquisitely or suddenly made happy, as frequently refuse his offered favours, their real bliss being too great to be exchanged for the illusive pleasures bestowed upon mortals by his minister. At length, however, every reality was forgotten; and Morpheus with his magic lanthorn amused the happy three till a late hour in the morning.

When they met at breakfast, a pensive felicity, which shewed itself in smiles and a moist-

a moistened eye, marked the countenance of Clarissa Melville. She enjoyed the happiness of her friend, exclusive of every selfish consideration; she delighted in the *presence* of her friend on her own entire account. Her smiles were given to Laura Warburton—the moisture in her eye to Orlando Addington.

The joy of our heroine was indeed compounded; it concentered the felicity of all her friends, and the present suspensive state of some of those she most loved, allayed in a degree the fulness of her happiness; nay, the inevitable exposure of her atrocious relations formed one shade in the prospect. But she collected her powers, and reasoned herself into unclouded enjoyment. The suspense of her friends would, she trusted, be of short duration, and the detection of guilt in her persecutors, the means of their sincere repentance and amendment.

Mrs. Lambert looked upon her two young friends with the eyes of maternal

pleasure.

pleasure. In their future happiness she saw that of her own, and her satisfaction was tranquil and complete. The tenor of their breakfast conversation may easily be imagined :—scenes of delight presented themselves, and plans of domestic pleasure were insensibly formed. Clarendon Castle was described, and the apartments ideally inhabited. The gardens were traversed ; the park rambled over ; the poor provided for ; the children taught, and the country rendered happy.

All idea of needle-work was laid aside, it being impossible to attend to any particular pursuit. Mrs. Lambert therefore took a coach, and called upon a Miss Bradley, with whom she waited on the lady who had employed her, and recommended that young woman to finish the chairs, &c. which an unexpected turn of circumstances had rendered it utterly impossible she could do by the time specified. The recommendation was accepted, and Miss Bradley very thankfully

returned

returned with Mrs. Lambert to take home the materials. In two hours after, Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth made their promised visit in King Street, which we believe we forgot to mention was the residence of Mrs. Lambert, and that both Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth lived in Piccadilly.

Before the gentlemen reached Mrs. Lambert's, they had arranged their determined methods of procedure, which they submitted to the approbation of Lady Laura, who gratefully coincided with all their concerted measures, but requested they would use as much lenity in their treatment of *the daughters of her grandfather*, as was consistent with *charitable rectitude*. They promised to observe her injunctions, *if they should be found practicable.*

The plan agreed upon was Mr. Smyth's going with Mr. Jervois to Bath, where the then Earl of Rushbrooke, who, in case of Lady Laura's death, would have been

been legal possessor of Clarendon Castle, resided for the benefit of his health. With him they intended to consult on the method of bringing Catchpole and Mullins to a public trial for their fraudulent conduct, which, notwithstanding their conditional promise to Lady Laura, they determined to effect, except they would accede to their proposals of retribution.

Before their departure, Mr. Jervois requested Laura Warburton not to take any one step relative to the Woodvilles till their return.

"I myself," said the good gentleman, "have no doubt of the disinterestedness of your Conyers; but for *his* future honour, and consequently for *your's*, it ought to be ascertained beyond controversy."

Laura, assured of the rectitude of the man she loved, wanted no fresh proof of the greatness of his mind; but earnest to evince it to the world, made the promise required, though her heart beat with wishes to remove all his anxiety.

At

At taking leave, Mr. Jervois put five hundred pounds into the hands of Lady Laura, upon a supposition that she must want a fresh supply of clothes, in order to make an appearance suitable to her birth and fortune. He likewise said he had ordered Hatchet to build a carriage, to be ready against the time that he should give orders for its painting.

Soon after the gentlemen were driven from the door, Mrs. Lambert went to Mrs. Swaine's, to learn intelligence of the family of Mr. Woodville, and was informed that the gentleman was returned, and that the house was a scene of joy. This was the morning after the prisoner's release from the King's Bench.

During the absence of Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth, our ladies employed themselves in preparing for a proper appearance at their return; not, let our readers understand, by providing a quantity of gorgeous apparel, but in purchasing genteel habiliments adapted to their respective situations,

situations, it being a most agreeable business to Lady Laura to equip her friends, whose accommodations in that respect had not of late been very considerable. Both Mrs. Lambert and Miss Melville objected to the purchases made for themselves; but our heroine asked if she was not providing for her mother and her sister, and said that if they did not mean to affront her, they would not make a single objection to her proceedings on their account. This silenced their opposition; and with tears of affection they promised to consider themselves as of her family.

We will now again return to the period which commenced this chapter, but will shift the scene to the dwelling of Mr. Woodville.

On the morning after his delivery, Mr. Lloyd told Mrs. Jodrell—we ask her pardon—Mrs. Palmingstead, and told her truly, that the family had slept till a late hour, having till a late hour the evening before,

before, sat up to enjoy their happiness; and after they retired, kept awake to muse upon their pleasing prospects.

As soon as the business of the revoked matrimonial engagement was properly dispatched, *Eliza Howard* came upon the tapis. Every one was anxious for her return; of consequence sedulous to explore the place of her residence: but their sedulity was ineffectual. After waiting two days in fruitless expectation, Mr. Conyers, whose impatience increased with the hours, resolved upon inserting the following paragraph in several of the daily papers.

"A respectable merchant, who has been confined under a false arrest in the King's Bench, was last Tuesday unexpectedly liberated by the interposition of some gentlemen of exalted characters; by which means, a final stop was put to a certain matrimonial negotiation."

This

This he hoped would meet the eye of Lady Laura, and occasion her return; but he hoped in vain. Day succeeded day—*Miss Howard* was neither seen nor heard from; yet still trusting that a short period would restore her to his wishes, he endeavoured, with as much patience as the ardency of his temper would permit, to wait the event.

For several days, nothing more than ordinary occurred in the family. The affairs of the firm required considerable arrangement, and great part of the day was employed in its business; but in the hours of meeting, the absence of Laura Warburton was constantly deplored; even the children demanded of their mother "*why Miss Howard did not come home!*"

In this situation was the family of Mr. Woodville, when Mr. Palmingstead appeared, and affairs, as has been related, settled by the interposition of Mr. Jervois,

Mr.

Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Ravensford, the day after the two first returned from their expedition.

CHAP. XIV.

The Earl of Rushbrooke.—The Loss of a Wife considered as a Misfortune by a young Nobleman!—The Return to London, and various Arrangements.

The reason why so many people are disappointed in matrimony, as well as through life in general, is, because their expectations of the degrees and duration of terrestrial happiness are fixed too high. They feel that they were created for felicity, and are not in the habit of considering that promised bliss is seated in futurity.

It is now incumbent upon us to pay some attention to the transactions which lately

lately passed at Bath relative to the affairs of our Laura Warburton.

Mr. Smyth and Mr. Jervois, who still boasted their title to the appellation of British merchants, had long since given up the business of the firm to their juniors, and lived independent, employing themselves in that most acceptable result of true Christianity, benefiting, to the utmost of their power, every one within its vortex. With respect to our heroine, they found a peculiar pleasure in acting unitedly in every circumstance in which she was interested. Mr. Jervois, indeed, was bound so to do by his office as her guardian; and Mr. Smyth claimed a title to the same character, from having been the immediate means of the late important discovery. With sentiments nothing short of parental, these two gentlemen undertook a journey to Bath, for the purpose of having some conversation with Lady Laura's only surviving relation by the father's side, the Earl of Rushbrooke.

 This

This gentleman had buried an amiable woman, to whom he was tenderly attached, and had been united about fourteen months, together with a son who died soon after he was born, and had occasioned the death of his mother, which circumstances had so deeply affected the Earl, that symptoms of a decline succeeded; but he was, when our gentlemen visited him, somewhat amended, and on the point of returning to his own house.

Mr. Jervois and Lord Rushbrooke had many years been known to each other, though not in the habits of intimacy, and each respected the other's character.

After the mutual interchange of compliments, Mr. Jervois introduced Mr. Smyth, and then proceeded to the business of the moment.

Never was man more astonished than was Lord Rushbrooke by the knowledge of his cousin's existence. He hesitated not one moment to relinquish the possession of Clarendon Castle, and to pay

the

the rent he had received, with even its accumulated interest. His own health, he observed, was rapidly declining: he should soon—(what an *outré* declaration for a member of the Upper House!)—rejoin his Alethea, and should certainly consider his cousin Laura his equitable, as well as legal heir. He had not, he told the gentlemen, made his will; and should he leave this world without performing that act, he should be satisfied in knowing that Lady Laura Warburton would inherit his property, both personal and real, as the entail upon his estate would cease with the extinction of the title, and he had not, even on the maternal side, any other relation so near in degree. He mentioned his having heard a high character of both her person and abilities; that, not having been much acquainted with her mother's family, he had never seen her; that her misfortunes had now greatly endeared her to him; and that he earnestly wished she could be induced to make a visit to Bath,

 that

that he might be introduced to her before he left this state of existence. Upon enquiry into further particulars respecting her *exile*, the family of Mr. Woodville was mentioned with advantage, and the affection of Mr. Conyers of course introduced.

"And had my cousin continued in America, would she have accepted this gentleman?" asked Lord Rushbrooke.

"Certainly," replied Mr. Jervois.

"Would her acceptance have been prompted by interest or attachment?" questioned the first.

"By attachment most pure and fervent," replied Mr. Jervois.

"And what now does she determine upon respecting Mr. Conyers?" demanded his Lordship.

"What would you wish her to do?" was Mr. Jervois's interrogation.

"I have only this to observe," returned his Lordship; "if she now rejects him, she is no longer a relation of mine."

"You

"You will not renounce your cousin, my Lord, on this account," said Mr. Smyth; "for I am persuaded that she would not deem *your* fortune added to her *own*, an equivalent for the loss of Mr. Conyers."

"Then she is a noble girl," replied the Earl, as a tear filled his eye; "and my advice is, that their union may immediately take place, as it will give us a reinforcement in bringing Catchpole and Mullins to justice, and exonerate my lovely cousin from being the immediate agent in punishing her notorious relations."

This proposition was universally approved, and the gentlemen separated mutually satisfied with each other; Lord Rushbrooke giving Mr. Jervois a *carte blanche* upon his banker for the use of his fair cousin.

In their first subsequent conference with Lady Laura, Mr. Smyth, who, the reader may have observed, had a facetious

turn of character, introduced the proposal of Lord Rushbrooke for an immediate celebration of her nuptials with Mr. Conyers, and gave his Lordship's reasons for the propriety of the measure.—"But," continued the arch gentleman, "we observed that, though *Eliza Howard* might think the son of a British merchant an eligible companion for life, Lady Laura Elizabeth Warburton would perhaps——"

"Oh my dear Sir!" interrupted our heroine, alarmed by the seriousness of his manner, "how could you possibly imagine that I, who was not only rescued, but generously——"

Mr. Smyth burst into laughter.

Mr. Jervois desired Lady Laura not to be alarmed; and relating to her that part of the conference, gave it as his decisive opinion that there ought not to be any delay in the execution of their plan, lest Catchpole and Mullins should by any possibility gain information of her escape from destruction. He therefore, with a generous delicacy,

delicacy, as if she would reluctantly comply, entreated her to dispense with the preparation and etiquette her quality demanded, and consent to empower Mr. Conyers to demand restitution in his own right.

The heart of Lady Laura throbbed at this address. The most lovely colour lightened up new charms in her face; and without the power of uttering a syllable, she cast her eyes upon the floor.

"My house," continued her kind guardian, "shall be your's till one of your own be ready. Mrs. Lambert and Miss Melville will be your companions, and more money than you can expend, ready for your demand."

"And so," said Mr. Smyth, "you have cleverly contrived to monopolize the whole party, and I may seek for company where it is to be found!"

"At my house, my good brother-guardian," replied Mr. Jervois, "you will always find such as will please you,

while I shall be favoured with the residence of these our friends, whose presence will afford me an increase of satisfaction, because it will attract your more frequent visits."

"You have no reason," returned Mr. Smyth, "to complain of my not visiting you even now, for of late I have lived more at your house than at my own. But let us finish our business. Will you, young lady, be a dutiful ward, and abide by the nomination of your guardians for your wedding-day?"

"What answer can I make," said Lady Laura, leaning her face on the shoulder of Clarissa Melville, "to such a question from so kind a friend?"

"Come, come, my child," said Mr. Jervois, "I will ease your difficulties. Consider me as the representative of your grandfather, and I know you will obey me.—This is Thursday. On Tuesday next you must consent to give Mr. Conyers a legal title to relieve Mr. Smyth and myself

myself from a part of the weight of your affairs."

"Oh my dear Sir," returned Laura, with a beautiful emotion, standing up, and clasping her hands, "I cannot—indeed I cannot so soon and so rapidly change from one state to another! When you consider how lately——"

"Excuse me, my dear, that I interrupt you," said Mr. Jervois; "the natural delicacy of your mind may very probably feel oppressed by these sudden transitions; but its native greatness will empower you to surmount trifling reluctances, when you reflect that an immediate union with the man of your choice is the most eligible method to settle the momentous affairs now in agitation, to the satisfaction of all who are materially interested in the business. If I did not think you to be sufficiently determined in the object—if in the least degree you balance in your opinion of Mr. Conyers

respecting his claim to your affection, I then——"

"Oh, I cannot suffer such a supposition!" cried Lady Laura: "indeed I *am* determined in my choice. I do not—I cannot balance in my mind respecting the merits of Mr. Conyers. Strange and ungrateful must I be if I did not acknowledge myself convinced of his disinterestedness and generosity!"

"What then, my dear Laura, can induce your hesitation, when we request your compliance with our measures, but a too great observance of punctilio?"

Clarissa, Mrs. Lambert, and Mr. Smyth all joined with Mr. Jervois; and Laura, unable to withstand the power of such combined forces, began to capitulate, and at length surrendered to their discretion. This important point determined, the removal of the ladies to the house of Mr. Jervois was fixed to be that evening; after which, our gentlemen, sending notice of their intention, made a visit to the family of

of Mr. Woodville, who were all assembled to receive their benefactors, and to learn the cause which induced them to interest themselves in their distresses—a circumstance which had not more excited their gratitude than their astonishment, and which with the utmost sedulity they had not been able to explore; Mr. Ravensford, the only person likely to develop the mystery, being equally ignorant of the actuating motive.

CHAP. XV.

Mr. Smyth and Mr. Jervois visit the Family at Charing-Cross.—Lady Laura's Hand offered to Mr. Conyers, and refused.

Great happiness can never be expressed: it sinks too deep into the heart to rise to the lips.

AFTER the ceremony of tea and coffee, during which both Mr. Smyth and Mr. Jervois were greatly pleased with the good sense and easy elegance of the family, particularly with that of Mr. Conyers, on whom they more immediately fixed their scrutiny, the conversation turned upon the arrest of Mr. Woodville, his liberation, and the consent Mr. Conyers had given to

to redeem his father at the price of marrying Mrs. Jodrell.

"We made no *conditions* with you, Sir," said Mr. Jervois, "and I am glad our demand of repayment is not so severe as a union with such a woman as Mrs. Jodrell. To be concise, our fine is the acceptance of one of the most beautiful, as well as best and most accomplished of the female sex, with a fortune almost princely."

"*My* acceptance, Sir! Did you address yourself to me?" asked Charles Conyers, with a countenance which depicted deep concern.

"I did, Sir. It is now proper that we should declare ourselves to have been only agents in the conduct for which this company has acknowledged obligation. Lady Laura Elizabeth Warburton has seen you, Sir, with the partiality your merits deserve, and offers you her heart, her hand, and her fortune."

"Lady

"Lady Laura Warburton!!" echoed two or three voices at the same instant. "Lady Laura Warburton! Why, Sir, Mr. Lloyd, Albert, and myself were walking through the burying-ground of Bloomsbury parish no longer than yesterday, and read the inscription upon her tomb," was the wondering remark of Mr. Conyers.

"That may be, Sir," said Mr. Smyth, "and yet there may be a Lady Laura Warburton in existence."

"True, Sir," replied the other.

"You do not doubt my veracity, Mr. Conyers!" said Mr. Jervois.

"My dear Sir!" said he, springing, and catching one of his hands, "excuse me. My soul is tortured. Let me not be ungrateful. Let me not be unjust. I have no heart now to give to any lady upon earth, however great her merit."

"And yet," observed Mr. Smyth, "you had given an assent to the proposal of Mrs. Jodrell."

"I had,

"I *had*, Sir, to effect an event, in comparison with which, the sacrifice of myself appeared inconsiderable."

"My dear son!" exclaimed Mr. Woodville, as his Lady wiped her eyes.

"Your patience, Sir! Permit me to explain myself to these gentlemen, to whom I feel myself accountable for a refusal of any proposal they can offer," returned Mr. Conyers.

"But, my good young gentleman, had our proposal been made a prior condition, you, who could accept Mrs. Jodrell, would not upon the same terms have refused so lovely a young woman as Lady Laura Warburton; and though the action *has* been performed, ought not a discharge of the obligation——"

"Pardon my interrupting you, Sir. I understand the latter part of your inference, and give it an affirmative; but you say I would not have refused Lady Laura Warburton upon the same terms that I accepted Mrs. Jodrell. Indeed I would, and

and the strength of my refusal would originate in the excellencies of which you tell me she is possessed. Lady Laura would doubtless have expected not only my *gratitude*, but my *affection*. I would not marry *any* woman to deceive her, not even Mrs. Jodrell. My affection was not—is not, I repeat, mine to offer. Mrs. Jodrell knew it. I avowed it. Had I not done so, I should have been a villain. The less consideration she merited, the less reluctance I had to sacrifice myself, *as far as it concerned myself only*. Had not my affection been previously engaged, the sacrifice, in comparison, would have been light indeed; for I would not have lived with Mrs. Jodrell—I could not: and in as plain terms as possible, without using that very expression, I told her so. What then could she expect!—what merit! But could I have accepted—and by accepting, deceived an amiable, unsuspecting woman, who, relying on my tenderness, placed her happiness in my power, what must I have been!

been!—and what my father! who deserved liberty too much to even endure it upon such terms. Excuse me, Sirs, for having been thus perhaps *unnecessarily* explicit and prolix. The subject seemed to me to demand it; and yet, for you smile upon each other, perhaps I have but exposed my credulous folly. Your phœnix is probably only a creature of imagination."

"My noble fellow!" exclaimed Mr. Smyth, "give me your hand. I here pronounce that you merit even a Laura Warburton; and what higher eulogium can I make upon your virtues?

"Friend Jervois," continued he, "I think you may now begin your history; for we cannot require any stronger conviction."

Mr. Jervois then said—"As you, Sir, acknowledge your affection to be irrevocably engaged, it will not be to any purpose to paint the merits of our ward, who, for loveliness of figure, and excellence of

of mind, surpasses every other woman I ever beheld."

He then gave a slight sketch of the events which marked the early life of our heroine, without mentioning the names of her relations, and proceeded uninterruptedly till the circumstance of her going on board the ship, when execrations from the gentlemen, and a sigh of pity graced by a tear from the lady, made him pause; but every one being impatient to hear the event, after a few minutes, he proceeded.

"The ship on which Lady Laura had been inveigled, was bound for the west. During the voyage, she discovered the atrocity of her relations; and after she had been some time on shore, was stricken with the horror of learning that her aunts and their husbands had meditated her murder, which she doubted not they believed had been effected.

Still persecuted by adverse circum-

stances,

stances, she went up into the country, was some days bewildered in an extensive forest, carried to an island in the river Delaware, named Swiggon, and at length rescued from a state worse than common slavery by three gentlemen, one of whom refuses the recompence of her offered hand and fortune."

CHAP. XVI.

Interesting Scenes in Piccadilly.

Illness is the criterion of affection. If during that period your friend betray an involuntary, a real anxiety, depend upon it that his friendship is genuine. If he be careless, indifferent, and make light of your affliction, his regard is lukewarm, and will give way to his interest.

THE effect of the last part of Mr. Jervois's relation was so great, that whatever we could have added, must have had the effect of an anti-climax. We therefore thought proper at *his* pause to end the chapter, and we now despair to convey by language an adequate idea of the astonishment which seized the auditors when they

they comprehended that their *Eliza Howard* was no other than the celebrated LADY LAURA WARBURTON. For some moments they were totally unable to utter a syllable. The heart of Mrs. Woodville dissolved in a shower of tears. Mr. Woodville's gratitude filled his breast, and kept him silent. Albert and Mr. Lloyd were occupied by a variety of sentiments; and the bosom of Mr. Conyers laboured with contending passions. At length he arose, approached the gentlemen, took a hand of each, which he pressed between his own, and with the most impressive tenderness and dignity united, said—

"It is impossible for words to give my feelings. Lady Laura Warburton, in every character, shines resplendent—her excellencies are beyond utterance. I will not grudge her the delight of conveying happiness to all around; but labour with pleasure under the weight of obligation she confers, because I know the power of bestowing increases her felicity. And

now

now permit me to withdraw for a few minutes to enjoy a bliss that is too great for observation."

In saying which, he bowed, and left the room. During his absence, every one endeavoured to say something of the much with which his heart was filled; and mutual congratulations employed the time till the return of Mr. Conyers, whose countenance still portrayed the strongest emotion.

"Where, gentlemen," said he, as he entered, "shall I find Lady Laura? I am impatient to throw myself at her feet. Till I can see her, I shall think I am losing a part of the time allotted to my existence."

"Softly, softly, young man!" said Mr. Smyth; "have a little patience! You certainly cannot see her this night."

"Not this night! You surely will not delay that portion of my felicity till another day!"

"Indeed but we will. It is settled

that

that you are not to be admitted to her presence till to-morrow morning," again replied the same gentleman.

Mr. Jervois now mentioned the cause of Lady Laura's not having informed her friends, when in New York, of her name and circumstances; but declined entering into the particulars of the discovery which had been made by means of the portrait, till the minds of the company should be more disposed to attend to interesting minutiæ.

When Mr. Conyers was assured that he should in a few hours be admitted to the presence of a woman he had so long, so ardently loved, and that she had assented to the proposal of her friends to be his on the ensuing Tuesday, he looked unutterable gratitude, tenderness, and felicity; and laying his hand upon his breast, bowed in silence.

Soon after this, Mr. Smyth and Mr. Jervois left this happy party, the latter giving an invitation to all present to breakfast

breakfast with him the next morning in Piccadilly; and returned to the ladies, with whom they sat in the highest harmony to a late hour, recounting the circumstances that had passed at Charing Cross, and particularly enlarging on the manner in which Mr. Conyers had been affected by the important discovery, to the very high gratification of our heroine, whose tears would not be suppressed; nor could she, when she anticipated the meeting of the morrow, restrain the throbbing in her bosom.

With respect to the friends at Charing Cross, their joy was mixed with a still unsubsided surprise. Mr. and Mrs. Woodville spoke their happiness, but Mr. Conyers was nearly silent. Superlative felicity is seldom characterized by verbosity; and what species of joy under Heaven could exceed that which filled his breast! A woman, in every respect formed to create admiration and love!—with whom he had long rested every hope for sublunary

bliss!—

bliss!—whom he had considered as lost to himself, now suddenly found as the secret preserver of his family (for the restoration of which he had sacrificed his fondest wishes), holding out her hand to his acceptance! No wonder that an *expressive silence* sealed his lips, as every word must have degraded his sentiments.

Mr. Lloyd spoke his joy with energy—Albert in raptures; but both were equally sincere in their affection, the one as a brother, the other as a friend, for Charles Conyers, and both had long held Lady Laura in the highest estimation, and had treated her as a beloved sister.

At an early hour in the ensuing morning, Mr. Conyers arose, and repaired to the house of Mr. Jervois, where he was received by that gentleman and Mr. Smyth with much cordiality; and after a few moments' conversation, expressed his impatience to be introduced to Lady Laura: upon which, the gentleman last named, who loved to deal in surprises, said he

 would

would go and prepare her for the visit; upon which he went into her dressing-room, and asked if she chose to see Mrs. Woodville before the rest of the company. She replied in the affirmative, but secretly wished the question had been asked of Mr. Conyers.

Mr. Smyth retired, and in three minutes Laura caught the sound of steps ascending the stairs; upon which she sprang across the room as the door moved, to meet Mrs. Woodville with extended arms, and instantly found herself in those of Mr. Conyers, who, transported at the unreserved kindness of his reception, caught her, and pressed her to his breast with speechless ardency, while her heart throbbed responses to his, as her face rested upon his shoulder.

In this tender moment the world around them was forgotten: they were unconscious of there being any other creatures in terrestrial existence. Virtue herself smiled upon the scene, which was

too

too pure and sacred for the presence of her adversaries, and barred every avenue to their approach.

"Most happy they! the happiest of their kind!
"Whom gentle stars unite, and in one fate
"Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
"'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
"Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
"That binds their souls; but harmony itself,
"Attuning all their passions into love:
"Where Friendship full exerts her softest power,
"Perfect esteem enlivened by desire
"Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
"Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
"With boundless confidence."

The softness of the passion has been well described by our rural bard, but its dignity seems wanting—that dignity which elevated the tenderness of Laura Warburton and Mr. Conyers to the sentiments of angels, and rendered the celestial guardians, appointed to superintend the affairs of mortals, propitious to their union.

Our heroine and Mr. Conyers were just entering with some degree of regained

composure on the great events which had occurred since their separation; and Laura, impatient to inform him of her meeting with Clarissa, had conducted his imagination to the Park, when the stopping of a coach, and a rap at the door gave the expectation of Mr. and Mrs. Woodville, Albert, and Mr. Lloyd, who were severally introduced to Lady Laura, and most joyfully received, every breast feeling as much true happiness as real friendship and a prospect of prosperity could confer, and mutual congratulations employed a considerable period.

Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Conyers, in whose breasts existed true sympathy, emphatically pressed each other's hand in silence.

At this period Mr. Jervois, at the request of Lady Laura, stepped out, and presently returned with Mrs. Lambert and Miss Melville, to whom our heroine was advancing with an intent of first leading Clarissa to Mrs. Woodville, but was alarmed at perceiving all colour instantly to forsake

her

her cheeks, and astonished to see her a moment after fainting on the breast of Mr. Addington, whom the reader has so long known and esteemed under the name of Lloyd.

Our young diviners, from whom no circumstance, however cautiously kept in the background, can be concealed, have long discovered the young West Indian in the person of the continental merchant, and are extremely angry at the vain attempt to hide him from their penetrating powers.

"This writer," says Miss Kitty Crimp, "is *most excessively* superficial. She, or rather he—for I think a woman could not be such a fool—must suppose we are all idiots, to be blinded by such a flimsy covering! It is not a change of name that can deceive *me!* The moment it was intimated that Mr. Lloyd had a secret attachment, that moment I discovered him to be Orlando Addington."

Miss Kitty Crimp, for whom we have long imbibed the most profound admiration, must pardon us for not stopping to deprecate her displeasure, as Miss Clarissa Melville, an object of so much higher estimation, demands our attention.

Mr. Addington, who was standing with Mr. Conyers near one of the windows when the ladies entered, started at their appearance; but not giving full credit to his powers of sight, stopped a moment to be convinced of what seemed an impossibility; when perceiving Clarissa, the moment he caught her eye, change countenance, he rushed past Mr. Smyth, whom he almost overturned in his flight, and reached her just in time to prevent her falling.

The surprise of the company upon such a phenomenon may easily be figured by even a common imagination; and as our friends are all of a superior order, they will exactly portray the scene which succeeded. The astonishment of Laura

War-

Warburton was greater than that of any other spectator. She could scarce believe it possible that Mr. Lloyd, with whom she had so long lived, and esteemed as a friend, should be the Orlando Addington of Clarissa Melville.

Mrs. Lambert was greatly affected upon the occasion, as she really loved Clarissa with the tenderness of a mother; and Mr. Conyers, who a few minutes before thought his happiness incapable of addition, was convinced he had been mistaken, as it now seemed nearly doubled, so genuine was the friendship which glowed in the breasts of him and Mr. Addington.

The continued suspension of Miss Melville's senses alarmed the surrounding friends. Mrs. Lambert, apprehensive that the appearance of so large a company should, upon her revival, too much affect her, proposed her removal into another apartment; on which Mr. Addington—no more Lloyd—who was himself so

 agitated,

agitated, that it was with difficulty he supported his beloved Clarissa, was assisted by Mr. Conyers to convey her to the next room, where she was seated upon a sofa, Orlando kneeling beside her, watching with the greatest anxiety her return to sense, and addressing her lifeless form by every tender epithet.

Some of our readers are heartily tired with this delineation of what they term folly. Invulnerable to the divine glow of sympathy, their ideas, when they hear the name of love, present a muddy and distempered passion—not that sentiment which softens the sorrows of this life, and gilds the prospects of the next—not the sentiment which will survive the conqueror of all things else—even mighty Death himself!

Love will eternally exist! Love is the cement of the universal fabric! Without love, we could have no life. Love called us into existence, and will accompany us

in

in every change of scene, but in that in which annihilation would be a blessing, if such a scene can ever be realized.

CHAP. XVII.

A Stage of Rest.

When the clew of happiness is put into the hand of man, let him be careful not to slacken his hold, lest, losing the twine, the ball should roll from him beyond recovery.

CLARISSA Melville is restored to life and happiness. Mr. Addington is as blessed as Mr. Conyers. The heart of Laura Warburton is an expansion of felicity. Mrs. Lambert, Mr. Jervois, Mr. and Mrs. Woodville, are softened to the delights of youth, tranquillized by time

and experience. Mr. Smyth and Albert enliven the scene: the first, by a native facetiousness continued to advanced age; the other, by the giddy exuberance of a philanthropic, versatile, and enraptured youth.

Have we a reader who does not wish himself in such a company? If we have, we shall deem it a particular favour if he would shut the book at this page, and never again presume to separate the leaves of our repository; for how can he judge of our productions?—how scan the merits of a composition which contain matters totally foreign to his essence? As well might a blind man criticize a painting, or a deaf one talk on the compositions of Handel; as justly might an unlearned Dutchman decry a Grecian Poet, or a Grub Street ballad-maker descant on the merits of a PARR or a FELLOWES, as a cold-hearted cynic, a misanthropical linguist, or a modern, unglowing Anti-Christian pretend to weigh, in the balance

balance of *his* brain, the sentiments we wish to disseminate in the hearts of our British youth.

Most sweetly flowed the hours of the day in the festive mansion. Every soul was tuned in unison; the kindest things, without study or design, fell from the lips of each individual. Every one spake his heart, and Harmony herself invisibly presided in the habitation of Mr. Jervois, who seemed renovated by the incidents of the season.

When the company retired to their respective dwellings, Mr. Addington and Mr. Conyers in one house, Laura Warburton, Clarissa Melville, and Mrs. Lambert in another, enjoyed the delights both of retrospection and anticipation. Every circumstance, both great and small, appeared to the deeply interested party of mighty import; and they passed chief part of the hours usually devoted to sleep, in conversation.

In the morning, according to a given

 promise,

promise, they all met to breakfast at the house of Mr. Smyth, who had planned an excursion to Twickenham, where they dined in high festivity, after having rambled several hours amidst the beauties of that celebrated village; and when they returned to the house of the gentleman above mentioned, were entertained with a concert of vocal and instrumental music by some of our best performers.

Harmony! blessed science! fitted to sooth the souls of the susceptible! Those who are deaf to its delights, are likewise invulnerable to the poignancy of mental affliction; therefore receive not that solace which their texture does not require.

The harmony of the spheres, through which the spirit of mortals will be wafted to Heaven, would, if heard below, suspend the direst tortures man can inflict on man. This, when the clogs of earth which impede our intellectual faculties, shall be removed, will vibrate ecstatic

delight on the *spiritualized sensibility* of the sons of men, as they ascend to higher and still higher enjoyments, inconceivable by sublunary beings.

CHAP. XVIII.

Orlando Addington.—A retrospective View.—A Wedding, and a Journey.

A marriage, founded upon love and virtue, is an engagement for eternity, and a commencement of the bliss of angels.

OUR sober friends are displeased with what they term our rhapsodies. Plain and simple matters of fact are more suitable to their plain and simple understanding. Whatever is ornamental, they consider

consider as gaudy; what enlivens, they deem frivolous; what is pathetic, they denominate folly. Honest John Trot is the historian to their taste, because he is not so impertinent as to put them out of their *undevious* path. To oblige these sober gentry, we will pursue our tale as regularly as our *ir*-regular fancy will permit, only requesting them to compare the present happy state of our heroes and heroines with what they so lately endured. Let Laura Warburton and Clarissa Melville, Mr. Addington, Mr. Conyers, and the family of Mr. Woodville in general, pass in review before their eyes; let their late troubles be duly considered, and the felicity which is unexpectedly showered upon them properly appreciated, and then let them treasure the remembrance against the day of discomfiture: for though, notwithstanding all we have asserted, they perhaps will not believe we have the authority of Truth for our narrative, neither will they say that we relate impro-

babilities,

babilities, *therefore* they may be as suddenly relieved from overwhelming distress, by an unexpected flow of prosperous incidents, as were our favourite *dramatis personæ*.

But before we return to the proper order of our relation, let us obviate an objection which we suspect some of our cavilling perusers have raised against the appearance of Mr. Addington, under the name of Mr. Lloyd, without their having been duly acquainted with the circumstances which placed him in the family of Mr. Woodville. Be pleased, therefore, Messieurs and Mesdames, to exercise your faculties of memory by bringing into present view the conduct of Major Addington to Orlando upon his refusal to accept the hand of Fanny Melville.

After his return from the Brazils, he staid a short time in Barbadoes, and then sailed for the Continent of America, where, applying to his friend Mr. Warder, he was recommended, under the name of George Lloyd,

Lloyd, to Mr Belcroft; and afterwards meeting with his old schoolfellows, for whom in early years he had entertained considerable partiality, he removed, as has been shewn, to New York; and being still desirous to conceal himself from the knowledge of his father, of whose continued inflexibility he heard frequent accounts from Mr. Warder, that gentleman generally making two voyages every year to the Western Isles, and had considerable concerns with Major Addington, with whom he used in vain to expostulate about his treatment of his son. The young gentleman's change of name was proposed by Mr. Warder, who was convinced that he could not long be concealed under that of his own, his father being determined, if possible, to discover his retreat, and to thunder anathema upon his head if he did not return to his duty; which determined Mr. Addington never unnecessarily to give any body his real name.

The Woodvilles, as we have said, had been

been known to the Major; of course they were made acquainted with the truth of all the circumstances relative to Orlando, but faithfully kept his secret. Even Laura Warburton, to whom they entrusted their most intimate concerns, lived a stranger to the circumstances of Mr. Addington, who felt repugnance to an unnecessary exposure of his father; but in his last voyage to the West Indies, where he kept himself as private as possible, he heard such instances of his violence and obstinacy, that his respect for his character began to decrease, and he told Mr. Conyers he should no longer impose upon him the task of keeping any circumstance a secret from *Miss Howard*; but the unfortunate turn of Mr. Woodville's family affairs postponed every idea of attending to concerns less important.

A querulous reader may possibly still object to the improbability of Mr. Addington's name never escaping the lips of some one in the family; but let that querulous reader

reader, reflect that the name was not *familiar* to them—that they had been in the *habit* of calling him *George Lloyd* long before Laura Warburton appeared in New York, and that Orlando Addington was a sound foreign to every individual by whom he was surrounded.

This, we trust, will exonerate us from the accusation of dealing in inconsistencies, at least on this occasion; and we hope that we are not in general justly liable to the imputation.

It is scarce possible for the inhabiters of our globe to experience more supreme delight than what gilded the hours of our select party under *the more than hospitable roof* of Mr. Jervois, where Laura Warburton was now declared mistress. The house, which was large and elegant, had been purchased by its present possessor of Lord Hazard, who in one night lost property to the amount of seventy thousand pounds; and, to pay his debts of *dis*-honour, while those of *real* honour for

for ever remained undischarged, sold all his unentailed estates just before his death, left eight penniless orphans to deplore his mistaken principle of rectitude, his eldest son inheriting twelve thousand *per annum*, with the titulary honours of his ancestors.

The Sunday spent as it ought to be, neither in levity nor fastidiosity.

The Monday a scene of the most endearing domestic harmony, the evening of which was partly engrossed by reading, and signing deeds and settlements.

THE TUESDAY is arrived.

At an early hour Lady Laura Warburton arose to prepare for the most important period of her life. Her Clarissa, alone attending, assisted to adorn one of the most natively lovely figures of the sex. Her dress was elegant and fashionable, yet simplicity was ascendant. To describe, would be to injure her appearance. The season was May in its infancy, and she looked its lovely youthful Queen.

Soon after she was dressed, Mr. Conyers

was

was announced, and admitted. The dignity and sweetness of his person and countenance, which we have before remarked, shone conspicuously. His elegance of figure would have ensured admiration in the most obscure situation.

When he entered the dressing-room of Lady Laura, an appearance of restrained rapture sat upon his features. His joy seemed too sincere and too great for expression. After a few minutes' conversation, he led the blooming, blushing Laura Warburton to the expecting company, and soon after to the carriages in waiting, the first of which conveyed the bride and bridegroom, Clarissa Melville, and Mr. Addington; the second, which was Mr. Jervois's chariot, carried that gentleman, as nuptial father, and the officiating Clergyman, who, being an intimate friend of Mr. Smyth's, had been made acquainted with the affairs of our heroine, and had engaged for perfect secrecy, lest an account of the wedding should appear in any

any of the public papers before proper proceedings could be entered upon, especting the Catchpoles and the Mullins.

After the ceremony, our party returned to the house of Mr. Jervois, where a May-day breakfast had been prepared by an eminent confectioner. The room was decorated with garlands of flowers, and every fruit that art could produce, was added to the free gifts of Nature. In fact, the entertainment, though confined to one apartment, was as elegant as affluence could procure, and a select band of music played in the saloon during the repast; but the performers, and even the attendants, were ignorant of a wedding being the occasion of the *fête*. The company, besides the party that went to Church, consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Woodville, Albert Conyers, Mr. Smyth, and Mrs. Lambert, every one of whom was deeply interested in the happiness of the nuptial pair.

After a breakfasting which lasted some hours,

hours, Mr. Conyers and Lady Laura, Mr. Addington and Miss Melville, in a post coach and six; Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth in a chaise and four, set off for the seat of Lord Rushbrooke, near Bath, where on the third evening they were received with the most affectionate welcome by the Earl, who was charmed both with his recovered and his new relation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

Mr. and Mrs. Catchpole, with Mr. and Mrs. Mullins, in the Shades.

That compassion for even the guilty, which does not injure the innocent, is perfectly consistent with the strictest justice.

AFTER several days spent in the height of elegant rural felicity, our bridal party, accompanied by Lord Rushbrooke, to whom change of scene was earnestly recommended by his physicians, returned to the metropolis, and began their proceedings against the aunts, and their husbands, of Lady Laura Elizabeth Conyers.

It

It might gratify the malevolent passions of too many of our countrymen, who delight in the punishment of detected vice, while they sit snug, and glory in the concealment of crimes which can only be perceived by the One Great, Forbearing, and Invisible Eye, to be told the horror which seized the souls of Mr. and Mrs. Catchpole, Mr. and Mrs. Mullins, when they received a conviction from the pen of Mr. Jervois, of the existence of their supposed murdered niece. For a period their habitation resembled a receptacle for maniacs—almost for demons, as each accused the others of being inventors or instigators of the direful designs which had been in part practised against the lovely subject of these memoirs.

At his first conception of what he termed the ——event, the soul of Catchpole was seized by the fangs of terror, and he appeared as if sudden destruction was rushing upon him in a torrent. His face was of a fiery red, and his boiling blood rushed

rushed rapidly through his veins; yet in a *moment* he turned his ever-active brain to project some method of averting the seemingly inevitable ruin, but in vain: for though many presented, no one appeared that he could deem efficient.

Mullins was absolutely stricken dumb; his teeth were sometimes fast closed, and sometimes shook violently against each other. His lips were of a pallid hue, and his countenance a deadly white.

Mrs. Catchpole was a perfect fury; her eyes emitted malignant sparks, and her execrations were horrible.

Mrs. Mullins at once lost her reason. Quick in her perceptions, she no sooner caught the ponderous idea, than, giving a dreadful shriek, she fell senseless; and when by a violent internal struggle she recovered from a state which the ensuing scene rendered enviable, a rageful frenzy made it necessary for her to be confined in a strait waistcoat, and fastened down in

her bed. But we will depart from this sketch of a human Pandæmonium, and pass to the result of their distracted consultations.

At first, Mr. Catchpole formed some idea of denying the identity of Lady Laura; next, to destroy her fame by affirming that she had wantonly gone off with a menial servant; then, that his brother Humphrey had inveigled her on board his ship, with a view to entice her to a marriage; with many other airy projections, which vanished as soon as they were formed, leaving him at last hopeless of all evasion. And now he cursed the extremity of his policy in making the mock funeral so pompous, and in erecting the monument over her imaginary grave. Then the vacant coffin—secured in one of lead!—all, all his precaution rebounded to assist the detection, to confirm the machination! Had they pretended to have privately buried her at Canterbury!—had

had they put only one coffin into the ground, and afterwards forced it open, and affirmed the body had been stolen!—in short, had any other methods been pursued than those which *were* pursued, it was believed by the now despairing party that their approaching ruin might have been averted. The clean and empty coffin, the treachery, now not doubted, of Humphrey Catchpole, whom their frightened imaginations suggested might still be living, with various other circumstances to which their alarmed senses gave magnified consequence, so damped the ardour of contrivance, that even the Machiavelian Catchpole acknowledged himself to be left without one resource.

It was long before they could determine upon any mode of proceeding, a considerable time being spent in mutual reproaches whenever they attempted to discuss the subject. At length the pen of the lawyer produced the following letter, directed

"TO EDMUND JERVOIS, ESQ.

"*My dear Sir,*

"What is it that you demand from the descendants of your very respectable and good friend, the late Mr. Warburton?

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your very affectionate
"And obedient servant,
"RICHARD CATCHPOLE."

To this wary and laconic epistle, the reply of Mr. Jervois was—

"SIR,

"The demand of the husband, as well as of the guardians (Mr. Smyth and the Earl of Rushbrooke having united themselves with me in that office) of Lady Laura Elizabeth, late Warburton, now Conyers, is the full and entire restitution of her estates, their produce, and all her

other

other property, together with the compound as well as simple interest of every shilling to which she is entitled, from the day on which the two sisters of her mother carried her on board that ship, *which it was not intended she should ever leave alive.*

"From the papers left by your brother Humphrey (who wished to marry Lady Laura), which we have carefully read over—from the forgeries under the signatures of the Earls of Rushbrooke—from other positive circumstances which it is not at this time necessary to particularize (independent of the presumptive proofs of the farce of the funeral, &c. &c.), no possibility remains of exonerating yourselves from the highest turpitude of intention respecting our ward, who has been signally protected by Heaven in various dangers, which could only have their source from the machinations of infernal agents.

"If a public process is your choice, demand one. An exposure will pain the mind of Lady Laura; but she has promised

 sub-

submission to the judgment of her husband, Lord Rushbrooke, Mr. Smyth, and myself, who think the decision of a certain great Law-Lord might be of public utility. To oblige Lady Laura, we make the sacrifice to our opinion of this preliminary measure.

"EDMUND JERVOIS."

In reply to the above, a letter was written which contained an intimation of an intrigue which had long existed between Humphrey Catchpole and Laura Warburton; but the circumstance of the funeral presented itself, and the letter was thrown into the fire.

To drop the scene.—Catchpole, not knowing what his brother might have deposed upon oath, nor what letters of his own might be brought to appear against the family, at length advised, what indeed even a demonstration of their inno-

innocence could not have prevented, a full restitution of Lady Laura's sequestered property, which the party aggrieved judged it equitable to accept without farther proceeding.

It may be objected by such of our readers as love to extend their power of punishing to the utmost limits of the law, and who wish to see Mercy banished from our Courts of Justice, that so detestable a knot of vipers ought to have been crushed to destruction; and indeed, in the present instance, however much we may honour the principle which actuated Lady Laura Conyers in her wishes to spare *the children of her grandfather and grandmother*, we certainly should not have hesitated to have punished the Catchpoles and Mullins in an exemplary manner, could we have been aided in that point by the laws of the realm: but the documents of which the injured party was possessed, though they would have demonstrated the criminality of the offenders beyond the

 doubt

doubt of private judgment, were not sufficiently positive to have procured any other sentence than what would have been given to the appearance and demand of Lady Laura; though the Catchpoleans knew not but that their opponents might have possessed, by means of the deceased Humphrey, more positive evidence. Every thing required was therefore gladly, or rather readily acceded to by the aunts and uncles of our heroine, and the estates were all given up immediately; but as, since their criminal acquirements, they had greatly exceeded their own original incomes, they were obliged to sell some landed property to pay the arrears; and making use of that pretence, Catchpole persuaded Mullins to agree in converting their whole possessions into money, and after every thing was settled with the friends of Lady Laura, to leave the kingdom, alledging that they could not continue in it with any degree of reputation, and that the sums they could carry with them,

them, would ensure their well-doing in some foreign country. Mullins, who had not the sanguine, enterprising spirit of the other, at length consented, but not without reluctance; and they privately took shipping at Gravesend, taking with them every shilling they could collect, leaving their respective families without a single resource for future subsistence.

The vessel in which our gentlemen were embarked, had not left the British shores more than eight days, directing her course for the island of Ceylon, when she was attacked by a Corsair, and after a strong resistance, captured, and carried to Algiers, where the lawyer and the contractor were exposed to sale, purchased by different masters, and consigned, for the remnant of their lives, to the rigours of slavery.

For several days the deserted sisters anxiously expected the appearance of their husbands, who they believed were gone into the country upon business. Alarm

succeeded anxiety, and in a short time their suspense was ended by the distressing certainty of their having left the island by means of a gentleman, who saw them go on board the Scanderoon, which was bound for the East.

The distress of these atrocious women was so great on this intelligence, that had it been accompanied by contrition, the Christian philosophy we have been taught in the school of the Reverend Robert Fellowes would impel us to compassionate the sorrows of their hearts; but as they only regretted the failure of their diabolical machinations, we must leave them, in hope of their future repentance, to that Mercy which is Infinite.

At the end of several months, an account was received from a gentleman at Algiers, that an English vessel, named the Scanderoon, had been captured and carried into that port, where the Captain, passengers, and ship's crew had been sold

in

in the market for slaves. Applications were afterwards made to the same gentleman for his assistance in endeavouring to discover our absconders, but without effect: no subsequent account ever reached this country of either Mr. Catchpole or Mr. Mullins.

Pecuniary want soon increased the wretchedness of the sisters. They had each of them several children, for whom they knew not how to provide sustenance; but Mr. Conyers by his agents watched the expected progress of their distress, and, by the advice of Mr. Jervois, offered them a provision in a northern district, several hundred miles from the metropolis, which they were compelled to accept with thanks, and to acknowledge was greatly beyond their deserts. To complete the Christian kindness, the children of both families were placed in proper schools, and were afterwards suitably provided for in various occupations.

That we might for ever dismiss from our presence the Catchpoles and the Mullins, we have advanced considerably in point of time since the commencement of this chapter; therefore will return to the period of Lady Laura's being put into possession of all her sequestered property of every denomination.

CHAP. XX.

The Establishment of the Firm.—A Picture of the Country.—The Friendship of young Ladies.

A country residence has greatly the advantage over a dwelling in a city. In the first, we contemplate the harmony of the works of the Great Creator; in the other, we only perceive the heavy works of man. The first must necessarily raise our minds to Heaven, the other clog them to the earth.

SOON after a recognition and renuncia-tions had been properly acknowledged and duly signed by all the individuals of the criminal party, Lady Laura and Mr. Conyers took possession of their house in Bloomsbury Square, accompanied by their congratulatory friends, who continued with

with them several days; after which, the family of Mr. Woodville, with Mr. Addington, removed to a house more convenient than that which they had lately occupied, situated in Great Queen Street. The town residence of Lord Rushbrooke was in Ormond-Street. Mrs. Lambert and Miss Melville resided with Lady Laura.

The return of our heroine was now duly announced in the public papers; and soon after she was presented by Lady Tunbridge to their Majesties, to whom Mr. Conyers was at the same time introduced by Lord Rushbrooke. A few weeks were then spent in the gaieties of London, though their happiest hours were those which were devoted to domestic enjoyments. Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smith, the Earl of Rushbrooke, Mr. and Mrs. Woodville, Albert, and Mr. Addington spent half their time in Bloomsbury Square; indeed the gentleman last mentioned almost lived there with his Clarissa, to whom he was in a short period to be united.

A banking

A banking house on a very extensive scale was now established amongst the gentlemen. Mr. Woodville, Mr. Addington, and Albert Conyers constituted the firm, which was supported by Lord Rushbrooke, Mr. Jervois, Mr. Smyth, and the happy husband of our heroine; but the profits, which were very soon immensely great, were assigned to the three first in equal proportions.

Our readers will now accompany us to one of the most captivating spots of earth in this united kingdom—CLARENDON CASTLE. In this lovely situation every thing desirable in sublunary existence was to be enjoyed. Groves, lawns, hills, vales, lakes, and fountains diversified the scene, and delighted the senses. The country around was fruitful and populous. The seats of several gentlemen with estates from eight hundred to four thousand pounds *per annum*, were scattered in the vicinity, and numerous well-built farm-houses and cottages met the eye in every direction.

direction. At a short distance from the Castle was a common of small dimension, surrounded by neat little habitations for labouring poor and artificers, to which the common belonged. These people by joint consent had every one a large garden in front of his house, which, meeting at the bottom, was fenced by a pale that encompassed a rich pasturage for sheep.

This curious place, which was named the Garden Common, was a frequent resort for the young people of the village, who used to form parties for an evening cup of tea in some of the bowers, or on the open benches in this rural rotundo; and every May-day a rustic *fête champêtre* in the sheep-walk was given to the villagers by the surrounding gentry, who used to grace the festival with their presence. The village, which was not far from the Castle, was one of the prettiest in England. It stood upon the side of a hill, with a descent to the south, and was inhabited by many genteel families of various professions.

Such

Such were the environs of Clarendon Castle—such the situation which a Gracious Providence decreed should recompense the Christian fortitude that our Laura had acquired in the school of adversity, and reward the filial piety of Mr. Conyers. Here, too, Mr. Addington and Clarissa Melville, after their years of sorrow, found the solace of independence and true friendship; and here Mr. and Mrs. Woodville, with their little ones, several months in the year experienced the unruffled delights of rural harmony. Mrs. Lambert here found, in a peaceful home, an abundant return for her fostering kindness to Laura and Clarissa. Here Albert enjoyed every pleasure that could charm youth; Mr. Jervois and Mr. Smyth all that could render advanced age comfortable; and Lord Rushbrooke every alleviation which ill health could receive.

How insipid to a man of the *ton* and the town are the rural, the domestic, the conjugal felicities we have been describing! To

To such, the *pallid glare* of wax candles is much more enchanting than the vivifying rays of the sun, or the tranquillizing beams reflected by the queen of evening. Light amours at routs, balls, and masquerades are more in unison with the tenor of their souls, than pure love and true friendship in grottoes, groves, and gardens; and conversations on Plays, Operas, and fashion, greatly preferable in their opinions, to the most refined, elegant, and improving discourse on subjects more intellectual. What an uncomfortable, dreary vacuity must render horrid the breasts of people of the last description in the intervals of amusement!—How restless, how frightful their solitary hours, and the evening of their day!—They fly with velocity from the thought of death, which, however frequently and indifferently they hear of its happening to others, terrifies their imagination by its strangeness when applied to themselves. Would they make a kind friend of this dreaded enemy, let

them

them often entertain and render it familiar; *then* will it strip off its deformities, and shew a smiling countenance; *then* will it draw aside the veil, and exhibit the glories of a future life; *then* will it dispense a balm for every worldly affliction, and present the idea of an early reunion with the friends of our hearts, from whom for a period we have been, or must be separated.

There was a time, and that not far remote, when the young people of this island were generally more happy, more settled than they appear to be at present. This is an observation which experience has written as a certainty; and it would be an employment worthy of first rate abilities to investigate the cause, and present a remedy for this deplorable juvenile disease, which we cannot but apprehend originates with parents.

There was formerly a custom much more prevalent than at present, of young women making at each other's habitations

domestic,

domestic, family visits of days or weeks, when they were entertained without parade or ceremony, and this was a nurture to friendship. The young people pursued their accustomary employments, and the family economy was not disturbed. Happy in this commerce, they looked not abroad for amusement; but now, if a young woman is allowed a visiter, great preparations to shew the family-gentility are made for the stranger, and contrivance exercised for daily entertainments, that she may not think *the visit stupid*, for that is the modern account of a period not devoted to dissipation.

"Oh, we were horridly dull!" exclaims Miss Bellair at her return from Felicina's peaceful residence. "I declare I never spent my time so stupidly! I was there a *whole month*, and I vow we did not make ten visits, nor had we company oftener than twice a week at most. To be sure, Mr. and Mrs. Freeman were very civil, and Felicina, with her brothers and

and sisters, did what they could to amuse me; but they had *only one dance* all the time I staid!"

"Oh shocking!" cries Allegretta, "how *could* you endure such stupidity? And what *did* you do to divert yourselves?"

"Nothing in the world but ride or walk about, and sometimes sit and work, while one of us read some book or other! and that I hate of all things upon earth!

"One could do that at one's own home!" peevishly observed the dissatisfied friend of Felicina!

Friend! did we say!

We recall the epithet.

A FRIEND would have been delighted with such an intercourse.

A FRIEND would not wish to be entertained *as a stranger*.

A FRIEND would only desire the company *of* a friend, *and* to be treated as one of that friend's family.

It

It will be observed by some of the Miss Bellairs of the age, that we have impertinently deviated from the subject in hand.

Expunging the seventeenth word of the sentence, we subscribe to the equity of the accusation, and in a new chapter will return to the affairs of our heroine.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

CLARENDON CASTLE.—*A Conversation.—Strawberry Hill.*

It seems but reasonable that those whom GOD has distinguished by His goodness, should distinguish themselves by their gratitude.

IN the first canonical hour of a lovely morning in June, Mr. Conyers presented the hand of Clarissa Melville to Mr. Addington, after which the friends bade an adieu to the town, and directed their course to our celebrated Clarendon Castle, to which they arrived the same evening, amidst the acclamations of the collected inha-

inhabitants of the village, who, being pre-informed of their expected appearance, had assembled themselves to receive their favourite young lady, for whom they retained the most grateful and affectionate sentiments; she having been encouraged by her grandfather to enquire into, and relieve the necessities of the distressed, from her days of childhood.

The delight of introducing Mr. Conyers and Clarissa Melville, now Addington, to a spot which she ever considered as a terrestrial paradise, and where she formerly had projected many plans for happiness, in company with that friend of her heart, was superior to what an ordinary mind can imagine, but what souls congenial to those of our favourites, will easily and instantly portray.

The company had dined at an inn upon the road, and reached the Castle by the time of evening tea, which was served in a room that gave a view of the adjacent

country, which presented one of the finest scenes in nature.

Upon a small acclivity opposite the window in which they stood admiring the lovely prospect, rose an elegant little building of free-stone, something like a castle in miniature, only that its windows were modern, and that instead of ivy, its walls were covered with jessamine and woodbine, now in their blossom, intermixed. It was surrounded by gardens, and on the summit of the ascent was a grove of evergreens. This, which was one of the most interesting objects within view, was the building nearest to the Castle, and belonged to the estate. It had formerly been occupied by a virtuoso, who, having stored it with a variety of curiosities, many of which were still remaining, gave it the name of the Museum; but it was more generally known by that of Strawberry Hill. Its late possessor had vacated it about six months previous to

our date, since which period it had continued untenanted. The parsonage-house, which was neat and rural, stood nearer the bottom of the mount, and appeared to belong to the premises. The patronage of the benefice was annexed to the Castle.

During the time of drinking tea, the conversation naturally turned upon the beauties which were presented from every direction; and Lady Laura, charmed at the surprise, united with delight, which manifested itself in the countenances as well as expressions of her friends, said, in a rapturous accent—

"Did I overrate the loveliness of Clarendon Castle? Does it not answer the most high-raised expectation? Ah, Conyers! have I ever known distress! If I *have*, this moment obliterates the remembrance."

Mr. Conyers.—Expect not from me, my Laura, any expression of my felicity. I must be very self-sufficient to imagine myself

myself capable of describing the sensations which arise from seeing you thus completely rewarded.

Lady Laura.—*Rewarded*, Mr. Conyers! Use not that expression. My happiness is so greatly beyond my deserts, that did I not know it originates from Him who "giveth liberally, and upbraideth not," I should tremble at the full measure of my bliss below.

Mr. Jervois.—Excellent, exalted young creature! Thy grandfather's precepts strike upon my ear every hour. My imagination represents him as contemplating the present scene.

Mr. Addington.—Which indeed seems to me to be not unworthy the meditation of angelic beings.

Mr. Woodville.—When I contrast the late with the present situation of those most dear to me, gratitude and wonder strive for ascendency.

Clarissa.—It is perhaps difficult to determine who in this company is most happy,

happy, but I am conscious that I ought to be one of the most grateful.

Mrs. Woodville.—If those who have received the greatest blessings, ought to speak least, I have surely a reason to be silent.

Lord Rushbrooke.—Never did I think there was an hour reserved for me, that would be so replete with satisfaction as the present. I enjoy the happiness of those around me, with a hope that in a short period my own will exceed all that can be experienced even at Clarendon Castle.

Mrs. Lambert.—The tranquil smile, my Lord, which accompanies that sentence, assimilates my own ideas; and were I capable of envy, would render you its prime object.

Albert.—You would then, Madam, mistake your point. *I* am without dispute the happiest being in this company; for I enjoy that of every one else, and my own private portion into the bargain.

Deny

Deny it who can. Besides, I am not married.

Mr. Smyth.—*Therefore* have a happiness in prospect. I have been listening with peculiar pleasure to the individual sentiments of my surrounding friends; and had not Albert turned the balance, should have hesitated into which scale to throw the preponderancy, and till he spoke, had a thought of giving it to my own; but, alas! I have no hope of a wife.

Mr. Jervois.—The greatest felicity a human being can experience, abstracted, if such a separation can exist in a rational mind, from that of the state ensuing, is certainly to be made an instrument of happiness to our fellow-creatures; therefore I think Lady Laura must at this crisis ascend the throne of felicity.

Lady Laura.—Oh my dear Sir! you load me with an insupportable weight. I can scarce bear with equanimity the pressure of my own individual joy; and would you burden me with that which I

see beaming from the eyes of these my surrounding friends? In good time am I divested of the power of conferring even common benefits, and glad that I must ask permission of Mr. Conyers to execute my future purposes.

Mr. Conyers.—I remember, my love, an observation you once made, which I will repeat, on the subject of conferring favours.

"A mind that is endued with some small share of generosity, will find itself oppressed by a sense of obligation; but where that quality resides in an eminent degree, the possessor will enjoy and partake of the pleasure which the obliger experiences in being the means of conveying happiness to a friend."

With such sentiments, you must have a high opinion of *my* generosity, or your own, my Laura, would forbear thus to oppress me with obligation; but I *can*, I DO enjoy the happiness you must experience by thus obliging.

Lady

Lady Laura.—As your memory, Sir, is so tenacious, will you be so good as to trouble yourself to relate the occasion of that observation, and then ask the company whether ever my debt of gratitude to you and your family can be discharged. No, my feelings at this moment assure me it will through life accumulate.

Every being present gave evidence of sensibility by a watery eye. It was some moments before any one could speak. At length Mr. Smyth, brushing a tear from his cheek, said—

"Pleasure and pain, I find, sometimes shake hands. I never in my life was more pleased than at this instant, and yet I could cry my eyes out, if I was not ashamed of the baby-sensation."

Every one said something expressive of the most refined delight; and the time passed in that true harmony which may be experienced, but never described, till we can converse by intuition.

 When

When tea was over, a walk in the pleasure-ground was a universal desire; and after some time spent in rambling about, Mr. Jervois led the way to Strawberry Hill, where every thing was found in perfect order, and a decent looking woman appeared to receive the company. These arrangements had been made at the request of Mr. Conyers and Lady Laura, by order of Mr. Jervois, who had agreed with the last occupier for the purchase of the furniture.

After the house had been walked over, and admired, the gentleman last mentioned drew the bride and bridegroom from the rest of the party, and told them it was the desire of their friends that they might early be informed of the determination which had been made respecting their future residence, lest they should experience any disagreeable suspense on that subject.

"It is the wish," said the good gentleman, "of the owners of this estate,

that

that you should spend the chief of your time at the Castle; nevertheless, as a separate home will convey a more perfect idea of independence, Mr. Conyers and Lady Laura request your acceptance of this house, and the estate on that side of the hill; not as payment—I use their own words—but as an acknowledgment of their united debt of gratitude and friendship. Mrs. Lambert will divide her time between you; and the rest of us, when not engaged in London, will look upon Clarendon Castle and Strawberry Hill as our country seats. This is the regulation of Mr. and Lady Laura Conyers, as it respects Mr. and Mrs. Addington; but Laura *Warburton* orders me to present this to Clarissa *Melville*, as a tribute to that friendship which struck such an early and strong root in her heart."

In saying which, he put into her hand bills to the amount of ten thousand pounds, and left the apartment.

Need we expatiate on the effect this act had upon the lately united couple?—or shall we refer our readers to the sensations which the relation of it occasions in their own breasts?

Those whose eyes glisten upon perusal, as our own do in reciting, read volumes of imagination in a moment. Those whose hearts remain cold, are such strangers to our idiom, that we should labour in vain to paint the feelings of Clarissa, when, dissolved in tears, she leaned her head on the shoulder of Orlando as he clasped her to his bosom.

"There is no bearing this!" said she, after a few moments of mutual silence. "But let us seek our friends."

"We will," he replied; "yet I cannot speak my sentiments."

As they entered the hall, they met those they sought, and——

"My dear Charles!"

"My dear Laura!" was heard in the

same instant, while Clarissa's eyes again evinced her susceptibility.

"Not a word!"

"Not a syllable, if you wish to make us happy," was the injunction of Mr. Conyers and his Laura; except, if situations were reversed, you would not have made this regulation with respect to us!"

"Who, think you," asked Mr. Conyers of Mr. Addington, "are the debtors on this occasion? Have you already forgot that observation of my Laura's which I so lately repeated?"

At this juncture the rest of the party appeared advancing; and the four friends, pressing each other's hands, without the farther use of language, joined the company in another walk up the hill, and then returned to the Castle, where an elegant entertainment had been prepared during their absence, and the young villagers were dancing on the lawn to a band of rustic music.

CHAP. XXII.

The Contents too numerous, and too various, to be particularized.

Charity has many senses, and in every sense is excellent.

IN [the week following the arrival of our friends at Clarendon, they received the congratulating compliments of the surrounding gentry, who sincerely rejoiced in such an acquisition to their society. A succession of entertainments engaged their time for several days, every family being sedulous to manifest their respect for the inhabitants of the Castle, where as much true happiness presided as could be expe-

experienced by beings not yet freed from mortality. The opulent were there entertained suitably to their circumstances—the poor relieved according to their necessities. There the doubtful were encouraged, and the distressed comforted. The widow there found protectors, and the orphans parents. If an individual was calumniated, the friends united their efforts to demonstrate the innocence of the sufferer, which we hold to be as great a charity as man can practise.

How many, by being unjustly accused, and finding an obduracy of opinion amongst their acquaintance in their disfavour, have grown careless of their conduct, and fallen into the errors with which they were at first charged falsely! How many, through envy, have had a clear fame tarnished, and a rising reputation pressed down beyond recovery! How many have been actually injured in their circumstances, and even their families ruined,

ruined, by only an indirect blast from a pestiferous breath!

People are, in general, either prone to believe ill of others, or too indolent to investigate "*what is no concern of their own!*"—for that is the unfeeling remark when the happiness of only *another* is concerned—take for granted the truth of the scandalous tales in circulation, and deem themselves extenuable if they only commit the *negative* crime of *not exaggerating* the reports they industriously repeat."

"*You have it as I had it, but I do not vouch its being fact,*" is the Christian-like balm applied to a fatal stab! How many, from the false colouring given to some of their actions by such a conduct as this, have been thrown into the shade of obscurity, who, if properly appreciated, and led by the hand of discriminating generosity, would have done honour to the partiality of their friends, and shone in the brightest circles!

Shall we stop to deplore that many minds,

minds, endued with many virtues, fail in this of real charity!

Shall we lament the avidity with which people, estimable in other respects, receive and disseminate what destroys the reputation of another!

Or, as "*example is better than precept*," shall we content ourselves with observing that in the vicinity of our friends, no individual could long labour under the pressure of these envious or malicious attacks, as it was always an object of their sedulity to discover and expose the origin of calumny, which they deservedly held in the greatest abhorrence?

Some time after the union of Mr. and Mrs. Addington, an account was transmitted from Barbadoes, by means of Mr. Warder, which stated the elopement of Mrs. Melville, with her daughter-in-law, accompanied by two young officers, for the Continent of America; that each had carried what valuables she could possess

herself of—the one from her husband, the other from Major Addington; that Mrs. Melville was since dead, and that Fanny was returned, unmarried, to the house of her father.

Mr. Warder then expressed his wish that Orlando would make a voyage to Barbadoes, as the Major was in a bad state of health, and lamented his past conduct to his son.

As at this period business of some consequence in London demanded the presence of Mr. Conyers, he and Lady Laura immediately set off with Mr. and Mrs. Addington, Mrs. Lambert making it her choice to continue in the country.

We omit to mention particulars relative to the separation of the friends, or the incidents of the voyage, but hasten to land the couple last mentioned in the island of Barbadoes, where Mr. Addington found his father in the last stage of his disorder.

Mr. Warder had prepared the old gen-

tleman

tleman for the appearance of his son, to see and to bless whom, he only wished to live.

His wish was granted. He asked forgiveness of Orlando; received it with tears; thanked him for not following his own reprehensible advice; gave his benediction to him and to his amiable wife, and died in the arms of Clarissa.

We forbear to enlarge upon the truly affecting scene which succeeded his departure; we forbear to paint the filial sorrow of Mr. Addington, or the kind, consoling sweetness of his beloved and affectionate Clarissa. All this the imagination of our readers will supply.

Mr. Melville now claims our attention. With open arms and streaming eyes he received his daughter. His conjugal distresses had awakened his remorse and his reason. Clarissa was therefore restored to both reputation and her father's affection. Fanny Melville, deprived of her

misleading mother-in-law, was disposed to lament the loss of her character, but she did not love her sister. The eldest son was married to a rich young widow. The younger children resided with the father.

By the assistance of Mr. Warder and Mr. Melville, Mr. Addington soon settled the affairs in which the Major had been engaged, and found himself possessed of a capital which greatly exceeded his expectation. He now established the mercantile business upon a new and improved plan, as had been previously agreed upon with the friends whom he left in England. Mr. Melville was to be the head of the firm in the West Indies; in North America, Mr. Warder; and Captain Johnson, the before-mentioned nephew of Mrs. Lambert, whose ship was then at Barbadoes, and with whom Mr. and Mrs. Addington returned to this temperate clime, was to be employed solely in their

service.

service. In England, Mr. Woodville and Albert (who in process of time married a niece of Mr. Smyth) were to transact chief of the business, as it was the ardent wish of Mr. Conyers and Lady Laura that Mr. and Mrs. Addington, who had both rural propensities, should as much as possible reside in the country. The line, thus extended, became immensely lucrative; and our British merchants enjoyed fortunes and felicity that Princes might envy.

During the many years that Mr. Warburton survived the parents of our heroine and his aunt Cullum, he had constantly purchased with the money of his granddaughter, as many estates as were to be sold within the district of Clarendon Castle: the surplus had been invested in the public funds, where it still remained, as neither Catchpole nor Mullins had any occasion for more than the interest, which, with the rents of the estates, they had expended,

pended, and were, as we have observed, obliged to sell their own property to enable them to refund;—the personal fortune, therefore, of Mr. Conyers was more than adequate to any of the projections, and he continued to purchase whatever was offered to sale in the neighbourhood, in which he founded manufactories of various descriptions, erected seminaries for the instruction of youth, hospitals for the diseased, receptacles for the poor, and retirements for the aged. He had, besides, genteel little habitations in different parts of the estate for the afflicted and distressed in superior stations; the relief of whom, in an unoppressive manner, chiefly devolved upon the ladies, who, it was said by an observer of their conduct and method, used to hear the sigh of sorrow before it escaped the lips of the wretched.

In the more arduous business of his institutions, Mr. Conyers was assisted by Mr. Addington, to whom he apportioned such

such employ as necessarily made him appear to be a principal, while Lady Laura pursued a similar mode respecting Clarissa.

Every winter our rural friends spent a few weeks in London, and every summer the London party lived several months in the country, delighted, and delighting each other.

And now have our readers any farther wish for their favourites?

"Yes; they desire to see them blessed in their offspring.

That wish is gratified.

Their children were numerous; and as they arrived to maturity, some of the young ones in each family entertained tender prepossessions for those in the other, which affording peculiar happiness to their respective parents, they were, by the most intimate ties, for ever united.

We have now traced the steps of our heroes and heroines from an abyss of distress to the zenith of earthly felicity, and

and that through a series of events neither impossible nor improbable.

The ordinary occurrences of life, if properly investigated, afford ample matter of wonder for a contemplative mind; though to a common one the designs of Providence appear to be effected by a regular, mechanical movement of events, which must as necessarily happen as the finger of a clock, guided by its wheels, must point the hours in its appointed round.

What automata does this make of men! Where, under this sentiment, is free agency?! Fate is at once established; and those who are too genteel to profess *any* religion, unfortunately enlist under the banners of the most *unfashionable* one in the kingdom, that of Calvinism, the knowledge of which must surely shock the delicacy of a modern fine lady.

A contracted understanding will object that the business of minutely inspecting the

the affairs of mankind, would be too much for even *Omnipotence!*

The *littleness* of these *minute philosophers* is scarce more pitiable than laughable.

Suppose a father to be in a large room with a number of his children playing around, would the task of inspecting their actions, and regulating their conduct, be either impossible, fatiguing, or unpleasant? No; and yet in the cases of governing the children, and directing events on this globe, the comparison of the father's power with the Infinitude of Him who created the universe, is as that of a spark which instantly expires, to the blaze of the sun.

Idiots of Nature's making, have a claim to our tenderness, and even to our respect; but idiots self-created, merit nothing but contempt. These last order of people, so common in this our day, believe that nothing can BE, but what they can

perceive

perceive or comprehend. By finite, they measure infinite; and the FIAT of Him who "spake, and it was done," by a command from a son of mortality!!!

It is our wish, it is our endeavour to inform and to awaken the ignorant and the dormant faculty of perception in the soul of man; which; whether asleep or uninstructed, is equally unprofitable. But let it be remembered that the first impotence is pitiable—the last a crime.

And will those of superior talent impede our effort, or envy our success? Will they who sincerely desire the effect, enfeeble the agent? Will they not rather rejoice if by *any* means, however humble, the cause of morality be espoused, the cause of virtue strengthened, the cause of *Christianity* supported, and that of PIETY enforced? Will they not give their voice in favour of even the attempt?

If a native vivacity of idea—perhaps better conceived than expressed—should

sometimes lead us to the verge of ridicule, let every one consider that it is at vice or wilful folly, not at individuals, that we level our battery; for we so truly avow a universality of love to our species, that it would grieve us causelessly to give pain to an ingenuous mind.

Would men consider their passions and ill qualities as natural enemies, rather than as darling friends, instead of being offended with the champion who takes up arms against them, they would co-operate with the assailers of these internal destroyers of their peace.

If we mention an empty head in the same line with a Colossean wig, will every man who wears one, shake his ears, and feel conscious of an accusation of vacancy? If we talk of vice and a cassock, impudence and a cockade, villany and a long robe, or bribery and a statesman, does it follow that every *clergyman*, *soldier*, *lawyer*, or *senator* has reason to feel himself offended? No: the honest, the

unconscious of every denomination will stand forth, offer us their support in defence of virtue in general, and thank us for even our puny effort to expose the disgracers of their fraternity.

From the KIND, from the GOOD, we shall receive the hand of fellowship; to the *weak*—and even to the *guilty*, we extend that of compassion. The first we wish to instruct—the last to reform; and if in a small degree we should have reason to deem ourselves successful, our labour will have received its reward.

FINIS.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.